NEW! N64 MAGAZINE FOR NINTENDO 64 FANS

Future Publishing
ISSUE 2
MAY 1997
£2.95

N64



BLAST CORPS!

Earth-shattering 8-page review!

WAVE RACE

Review, maps and tips!



PLUS!

JAPANESE AND U.S. NEWS AND REVIEWS!

GOEMON 5



DOOM 64



BE THE FASTEST!

The quickest way to get 70 stars and beat Mario 64!



ISSUE 2


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MAY 1997
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N64 MAGAZINE

We take playing games seriously here, you know.

1. N64 Magazine will recognise that the Nintendo 64 is the best games console ever created, and that its best games are utterly incredible!
2. N64 Magazine will review all new Nintendo 64 games, from Europe, America and Japan!
3. N64 Magazine will employ only the most skillful reviewers!
4. N64 Magazine will play the big games properly – through to the end, no matter how hard they are – before passing judgement!
5. N64 Magazine will pack every page with vital tips and secrets!
6. N64 Magazine is completely independent, and will not be afraid to call a crap game a crap game!
7. N64 Magazine will reveal the very latest exciting pictures of new N64 games from around the world!
8. N64 Magazine will not pad itself out with tedious waffle when it could be writing interesting stuff or showing great pictures!
9. N64 Magazine will give advice on all aspects of N64 gaming whenever its readers might need it!
10. N64 Magazine will be everything a Nintendo 64 fan could possibly want, every month!



That's that out of the way. Let's get to work.



WELCOME TO N64 MAGAZINE

Being surprised is always a good thing. Unless it's by an unusually large gas bill, or a lion. So when *Blast Corps* turned out, surprisingly, to be completely unlike any game I'd ever played before, and all the more fun for it, I was pleased. Then, when it started getting really difficult, with buildings that simply couldn't be knocked down in time to avert nuclear catastrophe, I began to half regret **N64** Magazine's promise to play all the biggest N64 games through to completion before rating them. But then, surprisingly again, just as I was getting into my stride, it suddenly finished. Pshaw. Still, *Blast Corps* is a fine game, and, if Nintendo can keep its price down here in the UK, it'll be well worth shelling-out for when it gets its European release later this summer.

In the meantime, the big news for us British is the release of the astounding *Wave Race 64* over here. Now here's a game that really does reinforce how brilliant the Nintendo 64 is. Compare its incredibly realistic waves and tough racing action with the equivalent offerings on other consoles and you'll clasp your N64 to your bosom more tightly than ever before. Zy's been playing *Wave Race* ever since it came out in Japan last year, and in this month's **N64** he takes you on an all-expenses-paid tour of the whole game, beginning on page 28.

Idly toying with a calculator this morning, while waiting for Tim to finish hurling abuse at *Doraemon*, I discovered that there are as many words in an issue of **N64** Magazine as there are in the average novel. Not bad for £2.95, eh? Especially as **N64** Magazine is all about the latest great Nintendo 64 games, rather than someone coming to terms with their adolescence, or spending a year in Kazakhstan. Just think about that next time you're writing in to complain about the size of Wil's lovingly-typed headings.

All that, then, along with Tim's dressing down of the feeble *FIFA 64*, Zy's superb 70-star *Mario* speed guide and the start of James's *Shads* Challenge Point finder, and you've got plenty to be going on with for one month. Don't you agree?

Jonathan Davies
Editor



GO! GO!

N64 MAGAZINE FOR NINTENDO 64 FANS

Issue 2, May 1997

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PLANET 64

News from the world of Nintendo 64

Starts on page 6

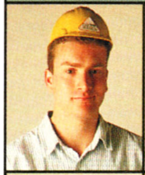
N64 MAGAZINE HOW TO...

Guides for all the best games.

Starts on page 56

TEAM 64

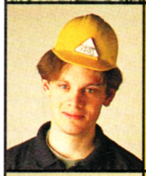
They might look a bit weird. But be grateful. Without them, **N64** Magazine would just be lots of white paper.



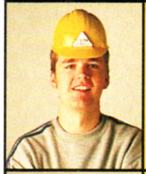
Jonathan Davies
To prepare for the release of *Blast Corps*, Jonathan spent the early part of this month hanging around building sites with his **N64** hard hat on, asking the burly, denim-clad JCB operators for tips. Fortunately, the concrete hadn't fully dried when we extracted him from the foundations of Bath's new Safeways.
Game of the month: ***Blast Corps***



Wil Overton
Persisting with the misapprehension that he's a Japanese bloke accidentally born into an Essex boy's body, Wil's spent much of this month poring over the katakana characters of *Doraemon*. He's also eagerly looking forward to Koei's *Mah Jong 64*, which he reckons could be a rival to Konami's *Mah Jong Master*.
Game of the month: ***Doraemon***



James Ashton
Our stealthy Dep Ed has been gliding mainly towards *Shadows of the Empire* this month. He's returned to it to ferret out all the Challenge Points. Scarily, however, he's become unusually excited at the prospect of *Castlevania 64*, announced at the Tokyo Game Show. And refuses to walk past a running tap.
Game of the month: ***Doom 64***



Tim Weaver
Tim, it has to be said, wasn't quite as impressed by *Doraemon* as Wil. "This is about as much fun as my ****," he said, causing the menopausal lady who regularly sanitises our telephones to look up in shock. We're buying him a bar of soap and a knife and fork set for his fast-approaching birthday.
Game of the month: ***Human Grand Prix***



Zy Nicholson
Zy's been coming in each morning (with bits of newspaper poking from his crumpled clothing and the imprint of a park bench clearly visible down his back) and working on his 70-star *Mario* speed guide. He's not bored of *Mario* yet, though. "I'll have you all seeing stars in a minute," he generously offered.
Game of the month: ***Wave Race 64***



REGULARS



D O 6



△ *All-new graphics on the weapons but their effects are reassuringly similar.*



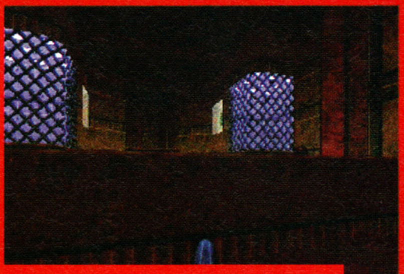
△ *The double barrelled shotgun is still undoubtedly the best weapon.*



◁ *Doom 64 has developed a new habit of materialising monsters out of the ether.*

▽ *The blue health bottles. Decorative but nearly useless.*





△ *Around level 12, some new weapons make their debut.*



'Terry Conrad' would be proud of the decor in this alcove. He so rarely works outside of Kensington, nowadays.



The plasma rifle makes a reassuring 'thzzfzzzllle' noise while you're holding it.



Turn the lights off and draw the curtains. You'll miss summer, but who needs a tan anyway?

DOOM 64

here be monsters

Doom 64	
GTI	
out now	1
UK release	May

Everyone's played *Doom* – versions have appeared on just about every games machine (including an FX2-assisted SNES) since its 1994 PC debut. It's the game that launched the first-person shoot-'em-up, and without it there'd be no *Quake, Duke Nukem* or *Turok Dinosaur Hunter*. In fact, *Doom* has been one of the most influential games of all time.

But **N64** Magazine takes a dim view of old games ported to the N64 from less powerful systems. Our view (before we saw the game) was that the designers were going to have to do something pretty special with the ageing *Doom* formula to get it up to N64 standard. We wanted all-new levels, better speed, re-vamped graphics, better sound effects and scarier monsters. The good news is that, for the most part, our requirements have been met.

Easily the best news is that all the levels are new. Whereas the PlayStation and Saturn got re-worked versions of PC *Doom* and *Doom II*, Midway have created all-new scenarios for the N64. This reflects a change that goes beyond simply providing something new for people who've played before. Whereas many of the original's levels were designed with multi-player death matches in mind, *Doom 64* is purely a one-player game. The levels are designed to maximise suspense and test the player against computer, not human, opposition. Midway also clearly had this shift in mind when they added extra bonus puzzles and secrets to some levels, complete with clues and rewards.

On the graphics front, news is more mixed. There can be no doubt that this is the fastest version of *Doom* yet. The analogue stick is a joy to use, allowing fully-graduated movement, perfect for inch-perfect manoeuvering and jumping. The texture maps for walls, floors and interactive objects such as switches show more variety, as well as having that special N64 quality: no pixels no matter how hard you jam your nose up against them. The world of *Doom 64* is, rightly, the most convincing of all its incarnations.

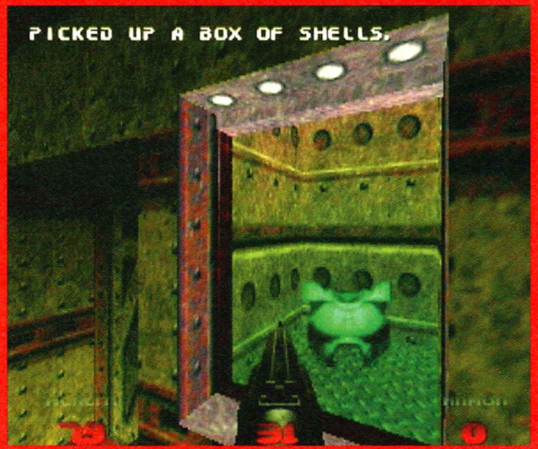
GO! GO!

However, the biggest disappointment is likely to be the monsters. In the original games, the sheer variety of baddies on offer was a feature in itself and their sprite-scaling and animation state-of-the-art. Now, however, games like *Turok* and *Quake* have set a new standard. Monsters are generated from polygons, allowing them to move more smoothly and to be viewed from any angle. *N64 Doom* keeps the sprite design of old but reworks the monsters into frightening cousins of the originals. Whereas before, *Doom's* baddies looked okay as long as you kept them in the middle distance, the power of the N64 allows for them to keep their detail at whatever distance, and pretty frightening detail it is to.

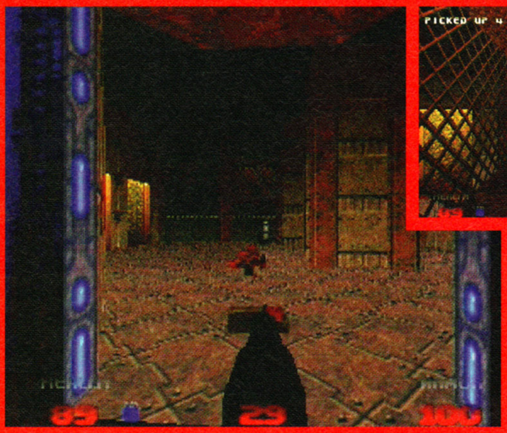
However as soon as the Demons, Zombies or Cacodemons start to move, they show all the animation quality of the Incredible Jerking Man. Okay, so none of us have ever actually seen a fireball-throwing zombie, but the chances are if they did exist, they'd be a little less arthritic than they are here. A related problem occurs with relative movement between the player and enemy. As you move around them, monsters or monster corpses have the disturbing quality of suddenly changing their perspective as the sprite is updated.

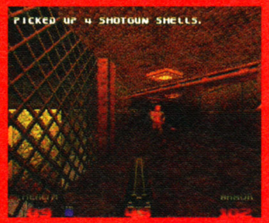
One of the best features of *Turok* was the way in which its enemies ran towards you, reducing the amount of time you had to react. In comparison, the enemies in *Doom 64* are particularly sedate, allowing you to blast them at your leisure. Because of this the best parts of the game come when you're under attack from multiple angles or when you flick a switch and unleash a whole horde of monsters from that previously-hidden demon cavern.

Despite its re-workings, tweaks and new bits, *Doom 64* is still unmistakeably *Doom*. The music (which defies description in conventional terms) is instrumental in creating that oppressive atmosphere that *Doom* addicts will know and love. Although it's unlikely that the game will become a true N64 classic, Midway should be applauded for working so hard on something that many would have tried to flog on reputation and past glories alone (see *Mortal Kombat Trilogy* for details). Next month, though, when we've played it through to the end, we'll deliver our final verdict on *Doom 64*.



Midway have been sure to include loads of secret stuff. A GOOD thing. Yes.





'Keep shooting. About the best tip we can give.

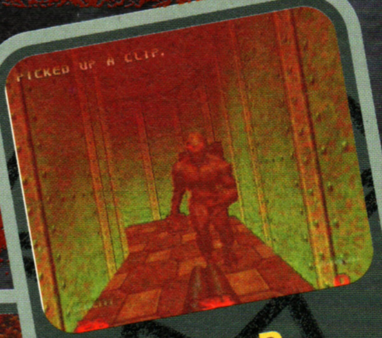
Find the blue key and open the blue door. It's as complex as that.

MONSTER MAKE-OVER

Although the monsters are unmistakeably *Doom*, they've all had a considerable face-lift since their appearances the first time around. The sprites themselves have been pre-rendered in a number of positions which are then tagged together to create the effect of movement.

ZOMBIE

The undead are back, still packing their pistols and shotguns. Pick up the ammo from their corpses.



IMP

These show the biggest graphical change of all the monsters. Still shoot fireballs, though.



DEMON

Their nasty cousins come in a partially invisible form. Their bite attack only works up close. Unsurprisingly.



LOST SOUL

A floating skull. Attack much faster and harder than in previous *Dooms*.



CACODEMON

The floating red cauliflowers are back. They fire lasers from the mouths and cackle. Like witches. Maybe.



HELL KNIGHT

Giant plasma-firing teddies which come in two forms: green (harder) and red (much harder).

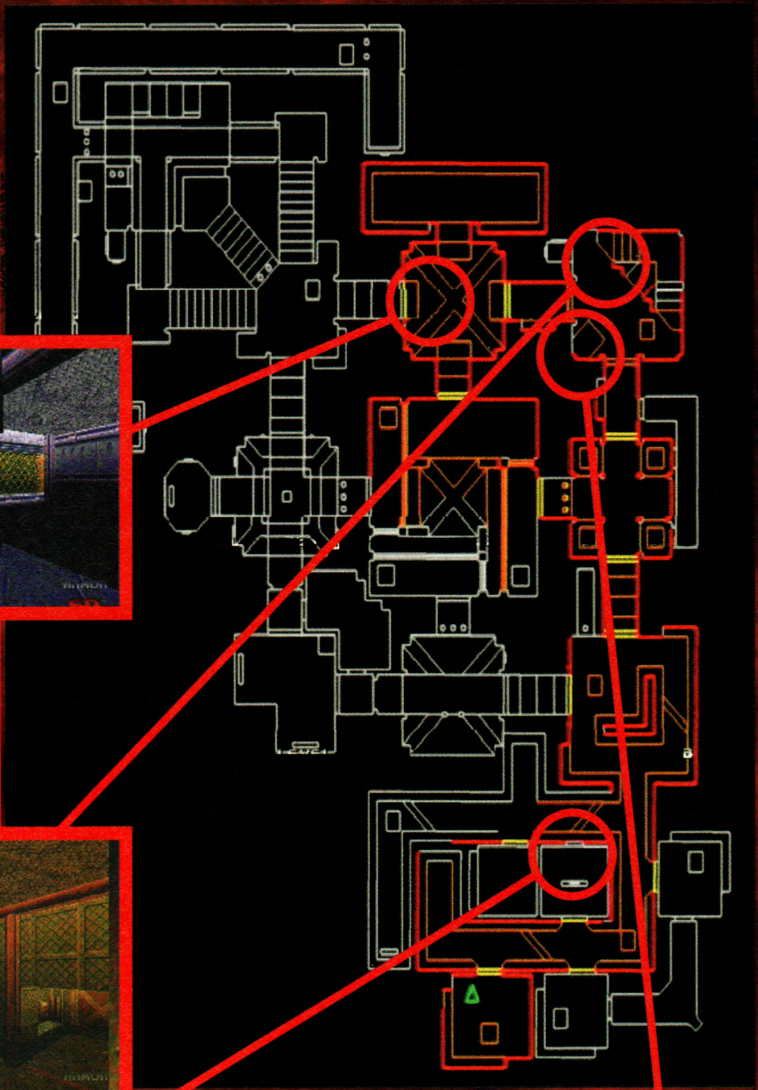


MANCUBUS

Bernard Manning with chain-fed rocket launchers. Attacking these with the Plasma or Chain guns is best.

WHERE AM I?

Only N64 owners will get the privilige of playing on these levels. Every single map is new and they've all been designed with single-player gaming in mind. Here's a map of Level 7 (Research Lab) to show you how things work.



Arrival! Luckily there are no monsters waiting for you in the first room, so it's time to get moving and sort out what you've got to do on this level.



Ah-ha, a blue key. The only trouble is you can't get to it. Looks as if you're going to have to find a switch to raise some kind of drawbridge affair.



A little blood-letting later and you've found the switch. Checking on the monitor behind you confirms this is the one you're after.





Result! One blue key is yours. Now it's off to find the red and yellow varieties hidden somewhere in the rest of the level.

TO BE CONTINUED... Next issue we'll be reviewing *Doom 64* level by level. Can't wait.

IN-GAME SHOTS OF KONAMI'S BRIGHTEST N64 HOPE – GO FOR IT GOEMON!





Edo (the old name for Tokyo) has never looked so good. In a 3D polygon, video game-ish sort of way that is.





Embarrassing as he may be, your faithful side-kick Ebisumaru can get you out of sticky situations – he is based on a god after all.



The Goemon series has always had its fair share of side-on Mario-esque platform sections and now it's all set to take on the plumber in the switch to 3D too!

It seems that the wandering-through-towns-and-goosing young-geisha-girls sections of the game have been left faithfully intact in Goemon 5.

GANBARE

3D madness in 16th century japan

With a playable version on hand at the recent Tokyo Game Show, Konami's N64 update of their classic *Goemon* series (sadly only the first SNES game reached these shores, as *Legend of the Mystical Ninja*, and then with probably the worst translation ever) is rapidly nearing completion.

While the actual structure of the game seems to have been carried over pretty much intact, the lightweight RPG/action platforming format has been given the expected 3D overhaul, and even Konami admit that it's expected to take *Mario 64* head-on. Hopefully it won't merely be a *Mario* clone, though: *Goemon* always had so much more to offer, like a simultaneous two-player feature and loads of great little sub-games. You could bet on the races, vent your anger in the Mole Bash and even play perfect mini versions of other Konami games like *Gradius* and *Xexe*. Whether *Goemon 5* will include a mini *GTI Club* is still unknown, but we can dream can't we?

Fortunately one thing *Goemon* definitely hasn't lost is its bizarre sense of humour. This time around Goemon and his usual entourage – the rather mentally unstable Ebisumaru, the robot Sasuke and the ninja/mermaid girl Yae – take on the twisted might of the New Momoyama (Peach Mountain) Shogunate and their nefarious plans to turn feudal Japan into a stage musical (?!!!). Well, it makes a change to fascist foreigners in rabbit suits.

Goemon 5 certainly looks extremely promising and we'll be travelling all over 16th century Japan following Goemon's progress in future issues of **N64** Magazine.

PREPARE FOR IMPACT!

Edo period mecha anyone? Meet Goemon Impact, every 16th century warlord's favourite 60-foot mobile suit. Goemon and Ebisumaru pilot him from within the head for some top giant robot fisticuffs.



The unfortunate Goemon reels from the dreaded 'bad perm' spell.



Never has a simple clay pipe been responsible for such damage. Wait until you see the scaled up version used by Goemon Impact!





Uh-oh, it looks like Ebisumaru's preparing for a repeat performance of his famous 'flatulence dance' seen only in the Japanese version of the first SNES-based Goemon.



Some mad kabuki mech's out for your sushi. Time to power up Goemon Impact!



Take him out with some pummling from Impact's giant metal fists...



...or loose off some hard-earned coinage in a blaze of firepower.



GOEMON 5

Ganbare Goemon 5	
KONAMI	
Summer '97	1-2
UK release TBA	

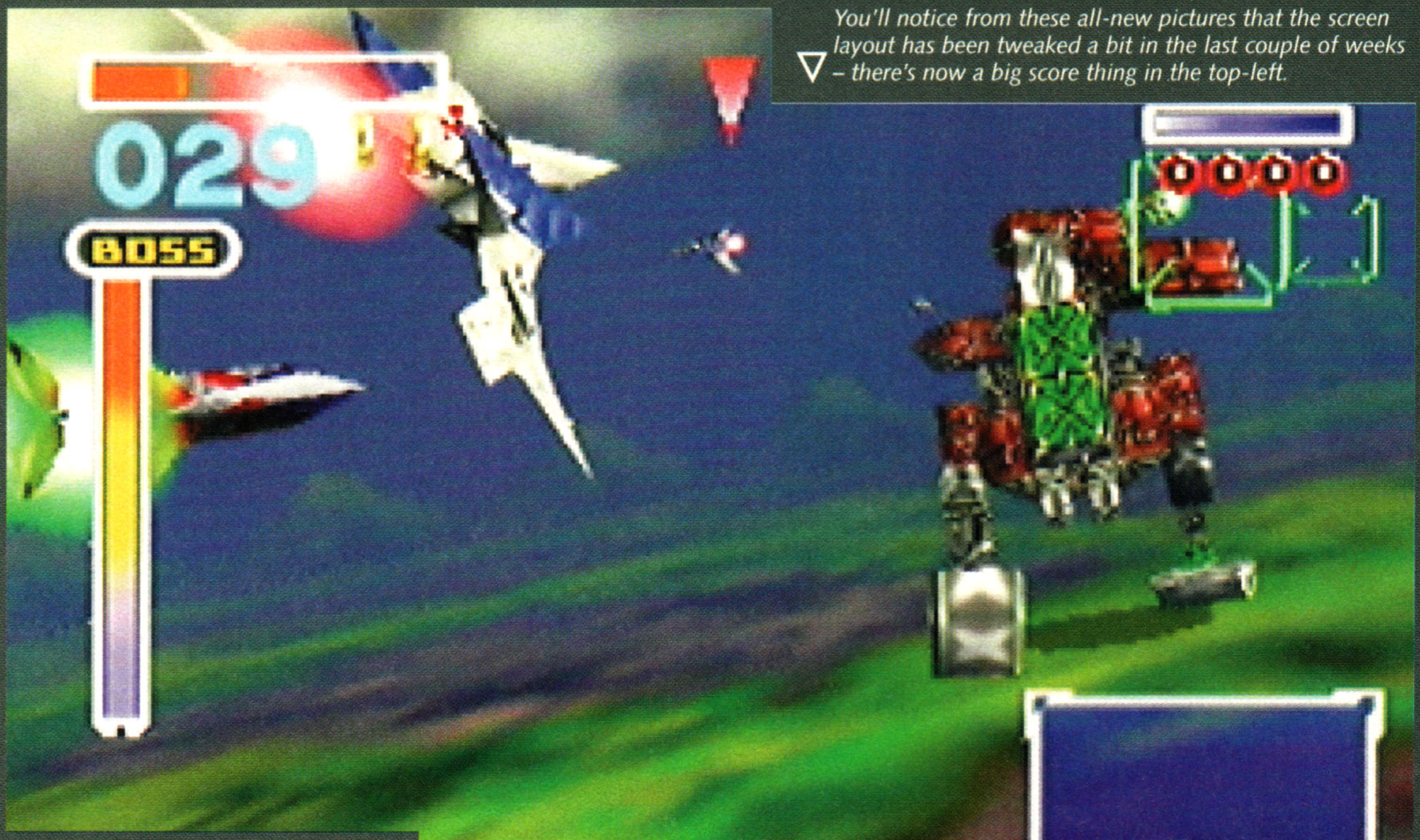


TO BE CONTINUED... Look out for more *Goemon* news and pics next issue.

IT'S ALMOST FINISHED! AND WE'VE GOT THE LATEST PICS FROM JAPAN!

STARFOX 64

fox, slippy, peppy and falco ready for take-off!



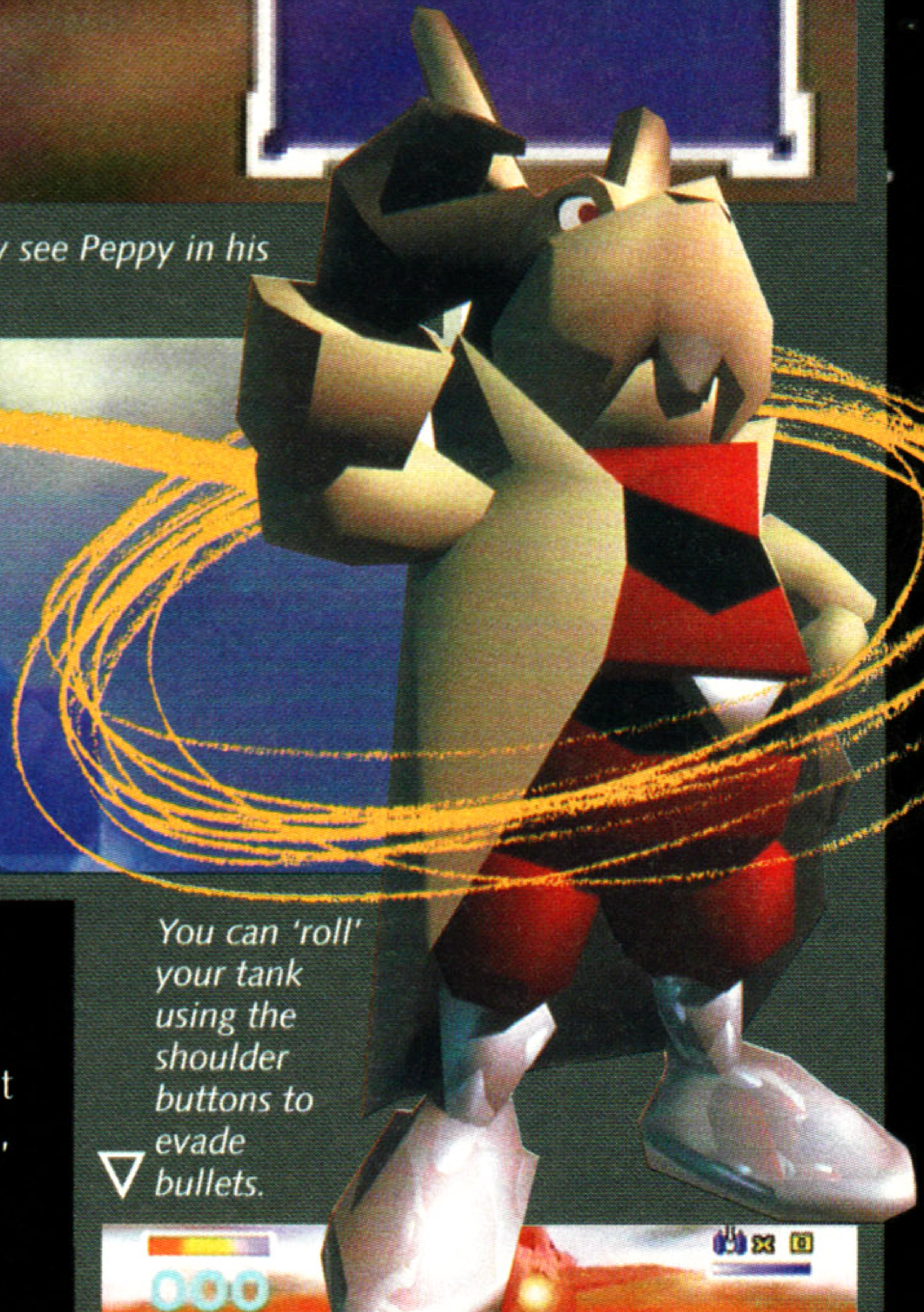
You'll notice from these all-new pictures that the screen layout has been tweaked a bit in the last couple of weeks – there's now a big score thing in the top-left.





Look! If you peer closely you can actually see Peppy in his Arwing cockpit, in this link sequence bit.





You can 'roll' your tank using the shoulder buttons to evade bullets.



Just in from Japan are some final, last-minute preview shots of *Star Fox 64*, whose release is now imminent. And it looks more stunning than ever, with some massive robotic bosses and a 3D spinning star map. If you look closely you can even see Fox McCloud and his pals sitting in their cockpits!

The new pictures also show in detail the new manoeuvres that Fox's team can do in their new, 64-bit game. The Arwing can now manage an exhilarating loop-the-loop, which is ideal if there's a baddy on your furry tail – you simply zoom up and around and reappear on *his* tail. And the tank does a nifty sideways roll move to avoid enemy fire.

One of the best things about *Starfox 64* will be the use of voice-overs. The original SNES *Starfox* had the characters speaking, but they just sort of went "Wibbly-wibbly-woop", and you had to read the on-screen text to work out what they were actually saying. This time, Nintendo claim they've sampled 600 bits of speech, and that 20 characters – including Fox's old friend Bill and the black-hearted mercenary Star Wolf – will each have their own distinctive voices. So hopefully we'll now be able to understand every word. (except of course we'll have to brush up on our Japanese until the game's translated into English for its American and European releases in June and August respectively.)

Star Fox 64 will be released in Japan just in time for us to review it in the next issue of **N64** Magazine. We can barely contain ourselves! N64

Starfox 64	
NINTENDO	
April 28th	1-4
UK release August	

4-PLAYER UPDATE





△ *The four-player mode lets you battle your friends in either Arwings or Landmasters. These new pictures show more closely the pyramids you have to weave in and out of.*

MISSIONS

Like the SNES's *Super Starfox, Starfox 64* takes place in the Lylat star system, where Fox's home world, Corneria, is under attack from the gorilla-like Emperor Andross. The Lylat system is represented by a 3D map which can be rotated and zoomed-in-upon using the N64 controller. So far, pictures from three of *Starfox 64's* missions have been released by Nintendo…





Corneria

The game begins on Corneria and eases you in gently, with advice from your boss, General Pepper as well as your fellow combatants. Here, Peppy's yelling at you to use Bottom C to brake.



General Pepper also provides between-mission briefings, urging you to save Corneria from the marauding evil ape.



Parts of the game scroll constantly onwards, like the SNES version, while others, like this bit with an incredible robotic boss, allow you to fly around freely.



Sector X

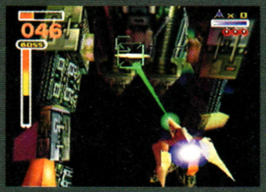
The Cornerian command has learned that Andross is building a giant space station in an area of space called Sector X, and is developing a new super-weapon there. He must be stopped!



Having previously been flying surface missions, you're now sent into deep space to take on hoards of Andross's fighters.

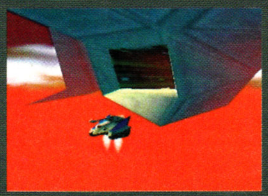


The super-weapon is, it turns out, this huge robot floating in space.



Titania

Oh no! Slippy's crash-landed on the robot-infested world of Titania. Fox and the remainder of the team must head in and rescue him. They're abandoning their Arwing fighters, though, and switching to Landmaster tanks.



The tanks screech across the desert, rolling left and right to avoid enemy fire.



Sand is thrown up pleasingly by the Landmasters' tracks.



TO BE CONTINUED… There'll be a massive review of *Starfox 64* in the next issue!



PLANET 64
NINTENDO 64 NEWS CENTRE

Go! Go! Show

DIRECT FROM JAPAN!

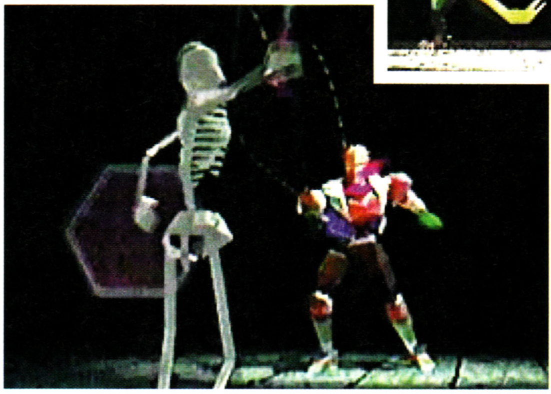
Report by Game Japan/Recca-Sha Corp.
(http://www.rcp.co.jp/recca/)



◁ *Thousands of Japanese school children, on their holidays, formed the bulk of the crowds.*



Castlevania *looked…* ▷



▽ *…utterly great.*

Held at the Tokyo 'Big Site' exhibition centre from April 4th to 6th, the Tokyo Game Show Spring '97 was timed to attract Japanese schoolchildren, who don't return to school until later in April. The Tokyo show is the biggest event of the year for the games industry in the Far East, covering an area of 25,690 square meters and attracting 104 companies, showing 459 games. It's grown since the first event last year, which 87 companies attended with 365 games. This spring's show, staged by CESA (Computer Entertainment Software Association), attracted over 120,000 visitors.

The show didn't just cover video games: PC games, on-line games, portable games and mini-games (like Tamagotch and Tetris keyrings) were also displayed. Unlike most Japanese games shows, which centre on individual games platforms (like Nintendo's annual Shoshinkai show), the point of the Tokyo show was to show off the games, so the machines themselves were relegated well into the sidelines.

From the N64 owner's point of view, though, the Tokyo show was a little lacking in action. Nintendo themselves didn't appear at all – they prefer to concentrate on their own Shoshinkai show – and altogether only around 25 new N64 games were to be seen. By contrast, the PlayStation accounted for about 45% of the 459 games on display, and the Sega Saturn around 31%.

There were some gems to be found, though. Enix's *Go Go!! Troublemakers*, in a nearly complete form, won over

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DONKEY KONG TV SHOW

Coming to our screens soon, possibly, is a TV series starring Donkey Kong. It's being produced by France's Canal Plus, and uses a novel combination of live action and computer graphics. Kong himself is animated using real-time motion capture, whereby an actor covered in sensors moves about and his actions are simultaneously translated into images of our overgrown monkey chum.



BIG MONEY

By the end of March, 6.12 million Nintendo 64s had been sold around the world. This is since the machine's launch last June. 2.04 million have sold in Japan, 3.42 million in the US (where, in February, the top seven best-selling games were all N64 ones) and 660,000 in Europe. But, because of poor sales of other Nintendo systems in Europe prior to the launch of the N64 here (particularly in Belgium, Holland and France), Nintendo Co Ltd's profit for 1996/97 is likely to be a mere 35 billion yen (£180 million) compared with the 48 billion yen (£250 million) they'd originally forecast. How will they feed their children? But it's not all bad news: because the N64's been selling so well around the world, Nintendo reckon that all their operations across the world will have made a total of 63 billion yen (£320 million). Bless 'em.

Tokyo

Nintendo 64 games scarce, but *Castlevania 64* looks great!



△ Goemon 5 *was playable, but nowhere near finished.*



◁ Go Go!! Troublemakers *was on show in a nearly-complete form, and was one of the N64 highlights.*



△ *Most N64 games were being saved for the Shoshinkai show.*



Baku Bomberman *looks like no previous* Bomberman *game. More on page 23.* ▽

many visitors. There was a brief but encouraging excerpt from Konami's eagerly-awaited *Castlevania 64* on video. *Rev Limit*, Seta's racing game, looked excellent, while Genki's *Multi Racing Championship* was present in prototype form, with only bare polygon graphics. The other big game everyone was looking forward to, Hudson's *Baku Bomberman*, was on display at a separate venue – Hudson's In-House Show. It looked great, an old idea spruced-up with cutting-edge technology. It's sure to be a big hit.

The Tokyo Game Show will be held every spring and autumn from now on with the next show being scheduled for this coming September.

NEW N64 GAMES ON SHOW IN TOKYO

Aero Gauge
(ASCII)
A *Wipeout*-type game.

Baku Bomberman
(Hudson Soft)
For the N64, Hudson seem to have completely rethought their *Bomberman* series. Once a 2D, bird's-eye-viewed maze game, it's now moved completely into 3D. There's more about it on page 23.

Battle Dancers
(Konami)
Newly-announced fighting game. Artwork only, so far.

Ganbare Goemon 5
(Konami)
A simple playable demo was on Konami's stand.

Castlevania 64
(Konami)
The 30 seconds of video footage Konami were showing off revealed that *Castlevania* (or *Akumajou Dracula 3D*, as it's known in Japan) has moved completely into 3D, with a whip-wielding Mr Belmont performing moves that would put most *Virtua-Fighter*-type games to shame. Most intriguing of all, a total of four different playable characters were visible in the clip, including three blokes (only one with a whip) and a girl who throws fireballs. One performed a nifty flip and somersault off a wall move. The 3D locations – starting with a huge castle – are dark and dripping with gothic atmosphere, with bats, spiders and other nasties scurrying about. We absolutely loved the SNES's two *Castlevanias*, and have immediately placed *Castlevania 64* near the top of our Eager Waiting list.

Go Go!! Troublemakers
(Enix)
Looking brilliant, and on target for a May 30th release in Japan.

J-League Dynamite Soccer
(Imagineer)
Related to *Super Soccer* on the SNES and featuring similarly fat-bodied players. Official license too!

Mahjong Classic
(Imagineer)
There you go, Wil.

Multi-Racing Championship
(Imagineer/Genki)
Not actually on show, but announced. It's a 3D racing game. With cars. Yes.



Rev Limit
(Seta)
Not playable, but looked extremely impressive.

Top Gear Rally
(Kemco)
See issue 1 for details.

Virtual Pro Wrestling: Ultra Battle Royale
(Asmik)
A wrestling game.

Wild Choppers
(Seta)
And, er, a helicopter game.

GO! GO!

55-IN-ONE GAME KEYCHAIN

Fire • 01302 751428 • £8

Whether you're on the bus, the train or the toilet, time mustn't be wasted. And a Game Boy – even a Pocket one – is too bulky to be carried inconspicuously. Enter the Mini Boy, which is the size of a matchbox, is attached to a keyring, and contains four games: a *Centipede* variant, a racing game, sort-of-*Galaxians*… and *Tetris*! They all involve a grid of large grey blocks, so don't get too excited, and *Tetris* is the only one that stands up to repeated playing. But there are 14 variations of each, including a terrifying *Mario-Kart's*-Kinopio-Highway-in-mirror-mode-style race head-on into the traffic, and an odd negative *Tetris*. It's pink, but still well worth £8.

80%



WIN! A 55-IN-ONE KEY CHAIN!

How do fancy owning your very own 55-in-1 Game Keychain? As well as keeping your keys secure it'll play 55 variations of four different games, including a mean version of Tetris. And our pals at Fire have given us 10 to pass onto **N64** readers. If you'd like one, pop your name and address onto the back of a postcard, along with the current world record for the number of people in a Mini, and send it to us by Wednesday, April 30th.

New Goods

Still got money to spare? Then bolster your N64 with some carefully-selected accessories.

ARCADE SHARK

Interact UK • 01204 862026 • £60

It's expensive, costing as much as two Nintendo controllers. But it's bigger than the N64 itself, it's moulded from thick plastic with a metal base, it looks like it'll last well into one's old age, and it performs extremely well. The Arcade Shark comes with a be-knobbed stick which screws into either the D-pad or an analogue pad, and when attached to the latter is a more precise alternative to Nintendo's stick, especially with fiddly games like *Pilotwings* and special-move-laden beat-'em-ups. There's a Controller Pak slot (although we wouldn't fancy its chances with the Jolt Pak) and, if you can find a use for them, auto-fire and slow motion. We thoroughly approve.

82%



SUPER PAD 64 PLUS

Interact UK • 01204 862026 • £30

Nintendo tend to get their controllers right first time, making third party offerings largely redundant – especially when, as with this one, they cost no less than the real thing. But the sturdy Super Pad surprised us greatly. Its weird shape is just as comfortable as Nintendo's, and its analogue stick actually feels more positive, thanks to a metal shaft, although the D-pad is a bit clicky. Auto-fire and slow motion are available for control completists, and, best of all, its C buttons fall more comfortably under the thumb than Nintendo's, making it great for C-heavy games like *Perfect Striker*.

86%



PRO GAME PAD

Spook • £30

Rather than trying to do something different, like the Super Pad 64 Plus, Spook's controller aims to replicate as closely as possible the official Nintendo controller. And the result looks like, well, a cheap replica of the official Nintendo controller, with a squidgy D-pad and a wobbly analogue stick. Except it's not cheap at all, costing the same as Nintendo's. As it has little else to recommend it, apart from the obligatory but largely use-free slow motion and auto-fire buttons and availability in a variety of colours, we'd suggest you plump for the real thing.

35%



NINTENDO 64 MOUSE MAT

THE • 01703 653377 • £6

It's a mouse mat. It features, variously, Mario, Bowser, Mario being attacked by Bowser, *Wave Race 64*, the N64 logo and, our favourite, *Mario Kart* (complete with 'CLASH!', 'SCRATCH!' and 'WOW!'). Yes.

70%





95%

1Mb MEMORY PACKS

Spook • £20
Datel • 01785 744707 • £20
Blaze/Fire • 01302 751428 • £20

The world will soon be awash with 1Mb third-party Controller Paks, all selling for about £20 and all seemingly identical to each other. Spook's and Datel's seem to work perfectly well, with a small button on the back flipping between four 256K memory banks, each the size of the standard Nintendo Pak. Fire's is better, though, with two switches that, in various permutations, select the four banks and let you know which one you've got. Assuming they hang on to data reliably (and we'll let you know if we have problems over the next few months), these seem an economic way of coping with the Pak-hungry *Turoks* of this world.

NINTENDO 64 WRIST PAD

THE • 01703 653377 • £7

Type a lot? Callused wrists? Then there's an outside chance you might be interested in Nintendo's official Wrist Pads. There's a Mario one, a *Mario Kart* one, a Mario-throwing-a-bomb one and a Bowser one. They're suitably spongy and, we can report, support the wrists amply. But… well, honestly.

45%



NEW NET MAG



Internet-conscious **N64** Magazine readers might do well to keep an eye out for *Connect*, a new Future publication that's, apparently, "a guaranteed geek-free zone". The first issue goes on sale on Thursday, May 29th, and for your £4.99 you get a CD filled with stuff that would otherwise take ages to download. It's even got its own Web site: http://www.totalnet.connect.com.

ADAPT AND SURVIVE

What news on NTSC/PAL adaptors?

The majority of **N64** Magazine's readers are likely never even to glimpse a foreign cart. But for the particularly games-hungry – those who are frustrated by the slow trickle of official UK releases – imported US and Japanese carts are tempting. The only snag is, thanks to a combination of a differently shaped cart slot and different internal security chips, import carts won't work unaided on UK machines. Hmm.

But! Suitable adaptors are now beginning to filter through. They work, apparently, although problems have been reported with *Wave Race*. One of the first to go on sale is made by Fire (01302 751428). We haven't had chance to test it yet, but we should have by next month, so we'll try it out then and give you the full results.

The only other alternative is a modified machine. Apparently (and this sounds a bit scary to us – don't try it at home etc), by removing the security chip from a UK cart and soldering it directly onto the N64's circuit board, it's possible to fool the machine into thinking it's got a UK cart permanently inserted. Project K (0181 508 1328) reckon they can either do the work for you or sell you a ready-interfered-with machine. Good luck!

N64 SYSTEM CARRY CASE DLX

Nintendo/THE • 01703 653377 • £30

Thirty quid might seem a lot to pay for a bag, but your N64 will be overcome with gratitude once you've tucked it up in this official top-of-the-range carry case. It's got two main compartments. One features velcro dividers that can be moved around to keep the console, control pads and power supply securely battoned down. And the other has pockets for six carts, six Controller Paks and all your leads and things. There's also a zippable pocket on the front into which the latest issue of **N64** Magazine will neatly slip. To complete the ensemble are knock-proof padded sides, a leather-effect-style handle, a removable shoulder strap and a neatly embroidered 'N' logo.

79%

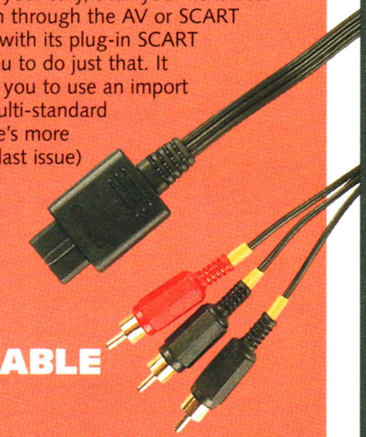


AV/SCART CABLE

Spook • £8

If you'd like a better picture from your N64 than the RF modulator's muddy outpourings, but haven't got an S-video socket on your telly, then your next-best bet would be to go in through the AV or SCART inputs. Spook's lead, with its plug-in SCART adaptor, will allow you to do just that. It won't, though, allow you to use an import machine on a non-multi-standard telly – you'll need Fire's more expensive cable (see last issue) for that.

88%

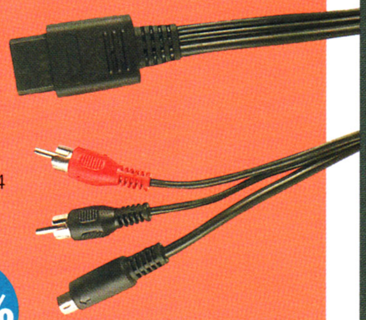


S-VIDEO CABLE

Spook • £7

Seven quid's not bad for an S-video lead. And Spook's works fine and includes a little extra plug-in bit that compensates for the colour wash-out you tend to get when using a UK N64 with a non-UK-specific S-video lead. Great!

90%



N64 SYSTEM CARRY CASE

Nintendo/THE • 01703 653377 • £15

For the down-at-heel N64 owner, Nintendo's lesser carry case doesn't feature the padding of its better-bred sibling, or the movable dividers, or the zips, or the cart and Controller Pak pockets, or the leather-effect-style handle, or the magazine pocket, or the rugged fabric, or the 'N' logo. But it will still carry an N64 without complaint.



62%

N64 CONTROL PAD CARRY CASE

65%

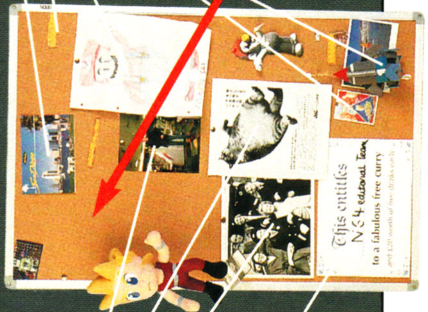
Nintendo/THE • 01703 653377 • £13

It's a devoted N64 owner indeed who, having spent £30 on an extra controller, would spend half as much again on a bag to carry it in. Still, this co-ordinates nicely with the Carry Case DLX, and has a couple of extra cart slots and a zippable Controller Pak pocket.



THE N64 BOARD

The **N64** Magazine office seems to accumulate enormous amounts of 'stuff', which, for safekeeping, we pin onto the **N64** Board.



- Postcard from Lisa. (Lisa!)
- Incredible dinosaur fact.
- Pic of Mario sent in by an **N64** reader. (Name unfortunately mislaid.Write in!)
- Card from some tea bags.
- Wil's Thunderbird 1.
- Awkward blank space. (Do you have anything that might fill it? Then send it quickly to The **N64** Board, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.)
- Photo of Jonathan in an arcade in Tokyo.
- A fat cat.
- Photo of the cast of 'On the Buses'.
- Certificate from when James defeated the whole of the sinister Future Publishing organisation in a video games competition.

PLANET 64 COMING SOON

Saturday Fever!

Once again, loads of excitement in the preview stakes. In fact, there's so much stuff coming soon for the N64 that we can't fit it all in. So, if you can't see the game you're looking for, check out our listings on page 25.



These arcade shots more than prove Mace's 50p-worthy violence.



Gorgeous arenas are more than enough excuse for some copious salivating. Exciting stuff, yes?



Ragnar is the game's muscle-bound Viking. Likes a bit of a 'rumble', yes.

MACE

ATARI/MIDWAY	64M	1-2	WINTER '97	TBA

Administering a nod in the direction of the PlayStation's forthcoming *Soul Blade*, with its weapons-led pummelling and 11-character set-up, *Mace* is Atari's winter attempt at securing the N64's beat-'em up crown. And with its forthcoming arcade incarnation (above) already receiving lorry-loads of praise, and Atari themselves promising an almost exact conversion, it ought to be able to make a courageous attempt.

Perhaps the most pleasing news to emerge from Atari is that *Mace* will be an entirely 3D affair, with its world made up of fully polygonal characters as well as *Virtua-Fighter-3*-like interactive stages as backdrops for the rucking.

Its cast of 11 fighters – narrowed down from the 30 present in the earliest stages of development – includes some interesting personalities: Lord Deimos, an armoured knight; the pierced-nippled, battle-axe-equipped hardman, The Executioner; Middle-Eastern sword-swiper Al-Rashid; token samurai Takeshi; Viking axeman Blood Axe; mace-wielding mercenary Mardos Kull; blind (?) monk Xiao Long; royal sword-lover Countess Tiria; ninja boy Koyasha; and the girl-with-attitude™, Namira. There're also two bosses, Grendal and Asmodious, both of whom possess a fair rippling portion of over-muscled fleshy bits.

Mace boasts some glorious arenas, all of which have been given a different set of hazards. This means as well as having to cope with the onslaught of an especially ticklish opponent, the well-placed dangers of spikes, quicksand, lava and acid prove a secondary peril. *Mace's* characters also sport some gorgeous graphical touches. Witness, for example, Namira's transparent trousers, or the flickering lighting effects as Xiao throws fire-stuff about.

Just look at the reflections on Lord Deimos' peculiarly reddened buttocks. Superb. Pictures of the N64 version appeared just as we went to press and the conversion looks very, very close.



Certainly, *Mace* is shaping up to be a fantastic entry to the N64's growing beat-'em-up billboard, and with the arcade version on its way and likely to prove thoroughly wonderful, this 64-bit exhibition could provide starving fight fans with the title they've so far been denied.

Fight

With the news this month of two new *Mortal Kombat* games and the possibility of a *Street Fighter 3* conversion, what better group of games to lick clean of N64 info than the beat-'em-ups...?

DARK RIFT

VIC TOKAI	64M	1-2	US: TBA	UK: TBA

With only two N64 fighters on the shelves so far, and no 3D brawlers available at all, *Dark Rift* could feed the hungry gaming public its necessary fighting food.

Ironically enough for a beat-'em-up, *Dark Rift* has a remarkably familiar backstory which we won't get into here. But, with a liking for the fighting system in *Tekken*, Kronos have stepped into a fantastical sci-fi world with human and alien creatures who fight to the finish for the Core Element.

With eight players and two bosses, a slew of combinations, get-up combos and chain combos, players already have decent learning curve to climb. Each character also possesses projectile attacks, and most are armed with weapons. A good thing in our book. Players can also use the left and right shoulder buttons to side-step into and out of the foreground to dodge atacks and can easily throw opponents by pressing B.

Running at 60 frames per second, character movement is quick and reactive, though possibly a little jumpy. Character design is truly fantastical. Evil-looking demons like Demonica and eye-candy contestants like Morphix are matched up with six more regular fighters with styles that range from fencing, to primal animal attacks (chewing at your enemies heart for instance), to Japanese style ring fighting.

Kronos aren't renowned for their fighting games, but *Dark Rift* could be the title to change all that. If it's as good as the game it's based on, it'll be a sure hit.







Unknown quantity Vic Tokai promise thunderingly concentrated combos.

MORTAL KOMBAT 4 & MK MYTHOLOGIES

WILLIAMS	64M	1-4 (?)	US: WINTER '97	UK: TBA

The biggest beat-'em-up news this month is that *Mortal Kombat 4* will be available on the N64 come Chrimbo – in full 3D. After the cash-in that was its predecessor, *MK4* will hopefully reaffirm the series' elite status

Details are currently sketchy, but shots from the intro have been glimpsed and do indeed look impressive, with Scorpion being introduced via a roving camera which also traverses the fully 3D shapes of Raiden, Sonya Blade and Liu Kang.

The game will appear first in the arcades this summer, but Williams are already busy with a 64-bit conversion. Needless to say, Nintendo's machine will be the first to get the game. More news next month.

Despite early rumours that this departure from the 2D fighting scene would be an RPG, it now seems Midway's other new *MK* title is, in fact, to be an action/adventure game not dissimilar to Capcom's once-glorious *Final Fight* series.

Set across eight huge levels, *Mythologies* places the player in the guise of the series' very favourite frost-bitten psychopath, Sub Zero, who must make his way through various texture-mapped 3D backgrounds and cinematic sequences in a storyline set prior to the very first *Mortal Kombat* game.

Around 30 other *MK* characters have been given the full-render treatment as well as the opportunity to use their famed moves in 'group encounters'. These promise to deliver the sort of action that made *Streets of Rage* such a huge hit on the 16-bit consoles.

No pictures have been made available for *MK Mythologies*, and none are expected for a quite while yet. However, just the game's description sounds fascinating and is a bold step for Midway and developers Tobias. We await more with breath fully-baited.

GO! GO!

Saturday Fight Fever!

WAR GODS

MIDWAY	64M	1-2	MAY '97	TBA



Purists aren't likely to be queuing up for War Gods but it's really not at all bad.

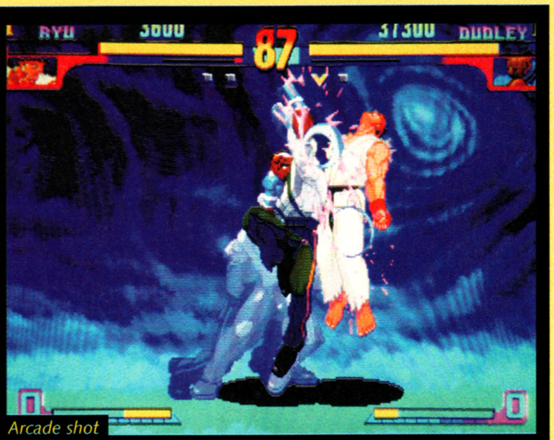
Its brief spell in the arcades really didn't do *War Gods* a great deal of good, as people realised fairly smartish that it couldn't compete with either Sony's or Sega's slicker competitors.

Thus, a console version of the game was hardly likely to top Most Wanted lists across the Nintendo-following world. And yet, despite the fact that it's plainly not going to set the world – or the fighting scene – on fire, *War Gods* on the N64 may go some way to corking the oft-heard calls for a 3D, 64-bit beat-'em up.

Story-wise *War Gods* is about as convincing as Neighbours, with an intergalactic traveller crash landing on Earth, spilling his precious ore all over the shop and transforming a selection of humans into War Gods – extraordinary beings with special powers. All of whom, it would seem, fancy their chances in a scrap, leading to a contest… to… see… who's… the… best… or… something. Yawn.

The game features 10 characters, as well as a *Mortal-Kombat*-esque button configuration and special moves set-up. Indeed, fans of Williams' aforementioned series will rejoice at the obvious and numerous similarities between this and *MK*, while *normal* people – most of whom will have been thoroughly annoyed with the blatant lack of effort put into *Trilogy* – possibly won't. Still, the visuals are lushly created with much work put into making the sprites move as realistically as possible.

Not likely to have you scuttling down to your local EB, then, but probably enough to raise a smile. We shall, as they say, see.



Arcade shot

STREET FIGHTER III

CAPCOM	64M	1-2	TBA

Not much yet on the almost inevitable conversion, except that our American correspondent reckons it's likely to be one of the launch titles – in Japan, at least – for the 64DD. Whether this tantalising prospect will reach fruition isn't clear, but the might of the arcade version (shown here) – with its nine new characters and backgrounds – should be enough to ensure its worldwide success whether it appears as part of the add-on or not.

The newest entry to Capcom's consistently brilliant series features a number of new elements, including the 'Super Arts' system that allows players to choose a combo from a set of three before taking a character into battle, as well as a series of re-written blocking moves to counteract the aforementioned combination of gyrating arms and legs.

More news is just *bound* to make itself available next month. And we'll have it for you. Obvseswewill



Arcade shot

New characters, new arenas and a brand new N64 version? Well, yes, actually.

CLAYFIGHTER 63 1/3

INTERPLAY/ NINTENDO	64M	1-2	JUNE '97	TBA





"Comical" moments and visual splendour should combine to produce a smashing little effort on Interplay's behalf. Hmm... yes...

Now about three-quarters complete, Interplay's N64 *Clay Fighter* outing continues in a traditionally tongue-in-cheek fashion, with this threequel now carrying the smile-inducing weight of a Naked-Gun-style '63 1/3' monicker.

The game features upwards of twelve characters, including new additions like Lady Liberty, HoboCop, Sumo Santa and Boogerman (who you may remember starred in a game of his own on the SNES), as well as better known members of the family such as Mr Frost, The Blob, Kangoo and Hoppy the Battle Bunny.

Keeping with the 2D action hasn't prevented the game's developers from creating some stunning backdrops – which, in some instances, include breakable surroundings – as well as some gloriously fluid characters who are, once again, given a high-quality stop-motion sheen.

New features include the characters performing a particular routine every time an opponent hits them in a designated area. For example, strike HoboCop in his rounded ass and he'll turn to the camera and moon. (*Er… please.* – Ed) Also, every time a player is struck, copious amounts of clay spurt forth, providing a plasticine alternative to *Mortal Kombat's* bloodbath.

Quite whether this new, improved 64-bit version will gain the series some critical credibility (especially after the middling 70%-ers that were the SNES coupling) is a major question. However, these screenshots, along with excited words from Interplay, would suggest that another humorous take on the beat-'em up might be just what the doctor ordered.

BODY HARVEST

DMA/NINTENDO	64M	1	SUMMER '97	TBA











Orange Jumper Boy there is understandably legging it away from this Fire-Engine-led mayhem. Plenty of that to see.

Our time-travelling hero finds himself facing the daunting prospect of these purple-arsed spiders. Bite you, they will.

A joke about crabs would be great, here. But, you won't have time for that. Kill it!

The problem with carrying any story on *Body Harvest* is that, even though we at **N64** were invited to see the game running, we weren't allowed to bring any screenshots away with us. Unfortunately, you see, Nintendo of Japan stepped in and slapped a whacking great 'Keep Out' sticker on the game. And, to make matters worse, previous screenshots aren't really relevant as the game has changed quite a bit since they were taken.

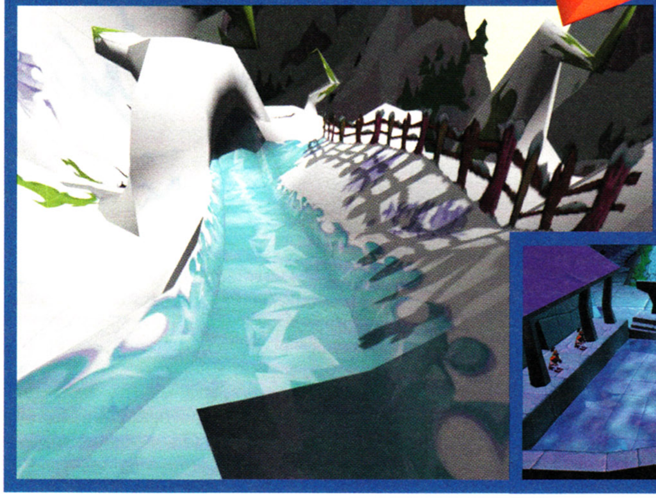
Whereas once it may have been a straightforward cross-time shoot-'em-up, it has now evolved into a totally immersive action RPG where everything within a specified area, from houses to vehicles, can be used, and people must be chatted-up in order to progress.

In fact, vehicular activity is very much top of *Body Harvest's* agenda, with over 130 land, sea and air modes of transport available, including ice cream vans, tanks and fire engines. However, the game is much more than merely a drive-'em-up, with different time zones having to be visited in order to prevent Invasion of the Body Snatchers-style extra terrestrial high jinks.

Graphically it's a workmanlike performance rather than a wave of visual splendour but, in-game, things get pretty darn exciting with the screen-filling other-worldly invaders providing a welcome diversion from the puzzles and four-legged beasties that beset you much of the time. The loose ends have yet to be tied up, but – damn it – we're expecting big things

ED

UBI SOFT	64M	1	AUTUMN '97	TBA





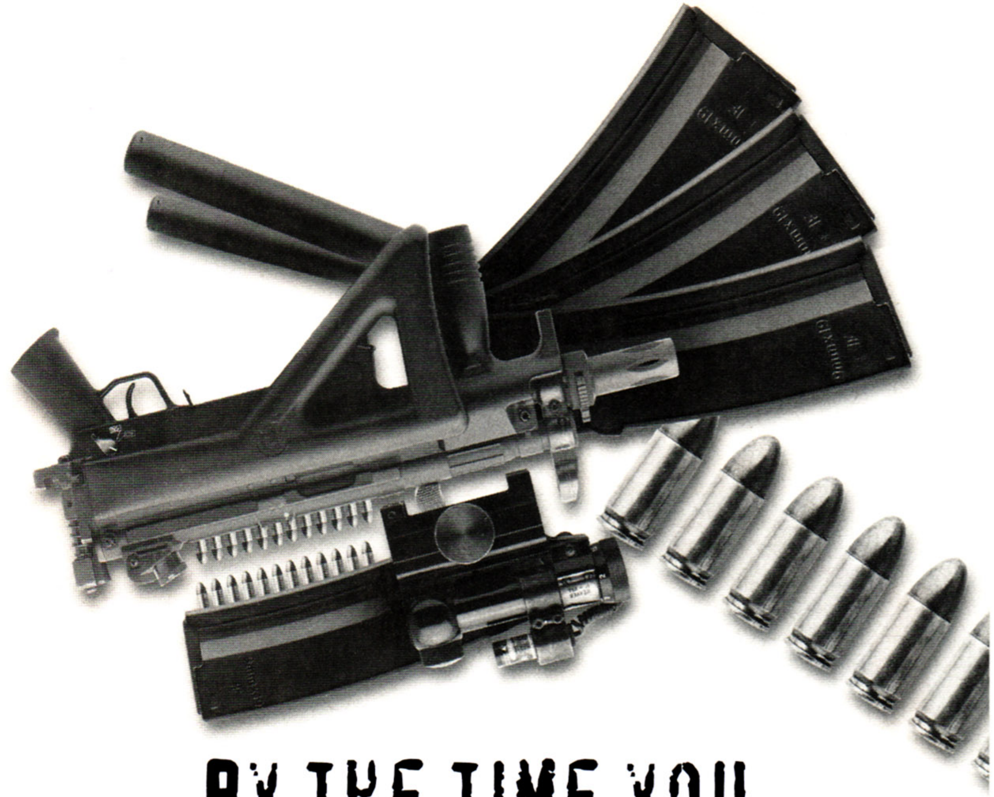
Environments, really. Look lovely, though.

Emanating from the same French development house as the soon-to-be-unveiled PlayStation shooting fest *POD*, Ubi Soft's third quarter action/adventure, *ED*, was this month finally given some daylight to bathe in.

Although relatively little was revealed, the game looks and plays in a similar style to Ubi Soft's 32-bit platformer, *Ray Man*, with strapping great comical characters tearing about the place, multi-coloured backdrops and a light-hearted storyline involving the square-jawed tomfoolery of the lad *ED*. And the rumour that it may appear via the much-talked-of 64DD was neither confirmed nor denied by the enigmatic Ubi Soft.

The game's appearance at America's E3 show in June should provide a motorway of concrete detail.

GO! GO!





△ *Oh, it might have a rubbish name but Extreme G looks spectacular.*

Sadly, Acclaim are the company that followed up *Alien 3* with ***George Forman's KO Boxing***, and ***Super Smash TV*** with ***The Incredible Crash Dummies***. So, even after the truly astounding ***Turok***, the sight of their winter racing game may not induce sudden spasms of excitement.

EXTREME G

PROBE/ACCLAIM	64M	1-4	SUMMER '97	TBA

And yet early word on their *Wipeout* look-a-like (provisionally labelled *'Extreme G'* and being developed by *Mortal Kombat /Alien Trilogy* dabblers, Probe) is extremely promising.

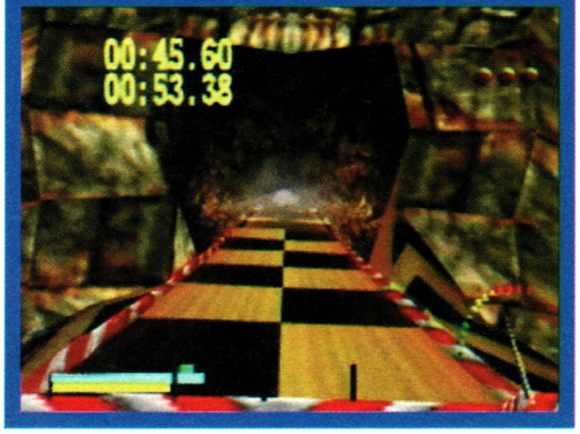
Taking control of a hover-bike, the player must work his way through 12 tracks – all apparently 'rollercoaster-like' in their structure – which vary in style from abandoned water pipes to city scapes. In fact, several of the tracks lead into underwater caverns and lava-filled pools as well as hazard-strewn valleys complete with falling boulders.

Weapons-wise the game is likely to deliver in spades, with the usual melée of bullet-spitters accompanied by some wonderfully original mayhem-makers such as the Control Swap Missiles, which have the ability to reverse the target vehicle's controls, and Phospor Flares, which blind all the competitors behind you. Invisibility and Turbo Particle Accelerators – last seen in *Turok* – will also be given a run-out.

The game will also lay claim to a *Mario Kart*-style four-player mode where the screen quarters itself up and provides players with a chance to test their metal against three friends.

Blighty boys Probe believe the game to be faster and smoother than Nintendo's kart-'em-up and, certainly, early word is enough to back them up. Having been in development for almost a year already, the game – soon to be properly named, thank God – looks, moves and bodes wonderfully well.

Manage to produce something as good as Wipeout 2097 and Acclaim are onto a winner. ▽



BAKU BOMBERMAN



HUDSONSOFT | 64M | 1-4 | SUMMER '97 | TBA

At its peak on the Super NES, *Super Bomberman* (with multi-tap for four players) emerged as one of the most addictive multiplayer games of its time – and it wasn't that long ago either. But Hudson look to change the look and way in which gamers play *Bomberman* for the Nintendo 64, although they'll hopefully keep all the tension, chemistry and multi-player fun of the original.

Of course, that sounds easy, but it may not be. Many industry pundits gawked at the one-player version of *Super Bomberman* and believed that the four-player game was a mere fluke. **N64** Magazine hears from Japan that Hudsonsoft have re-tooled their development house, with a full-tilt focus on transforming their titles into 3D games, with *Bomberman* at the fore.

Baku Bomberman (a working title meaning something like *'Bang Bomberman'*) is still less than 50% complete, but it appears to be a fully polygonal, texture-mapped action game with levels that make use of 3D platforms and puzzles interconnected with bridges, alleys, and secret underground passages. It's believed enemies appear throughout with powers equal to *Bomberman's*, leaving the player with only his or her wits to see them through to the level's end.

Even less is known about the game's multiplayer capabilities, but we're sure the facility will be included and be sensational. And with the N64's four built-in controller ports, gamers won't have to buy a multi-tap. Then again, Hudsonsoft don't deny that they've been considering an eight or even ten-player tap. We'll report more next issue.











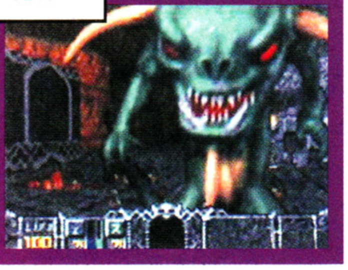
The switch to a sort of top-down 3D looks to have given Bomberman a new, sophisticated look. How will it work?

Mucho blowing-yourself-up action taking place, here. Special, like.

HEXEN

id/RAVEN/GTI | 64M | 1-4 | JUNE'97 | TBA

Early pictures are slightly fuzzy but the game's showing enormous early potential.



With *Doom* enthusiasts likely to find themselves spoilt for choice come the end of the year – *Doom 64* itself, *Final Doom 2, Turok 2, Quake 64* and *GoldenEye 007* are all at various stages of development – a breath of fresh air is plainly needed. And cloud-swallowing PC smash *Hexen* may well have a crate already bottled.

The main reason is its four-player split-screen mode, where said four competitors can compete against each other head-to-head. The set-up went down a storm on the PC and has already proven similarly successful in early tests on the N64. 70% complete versions, however, did suffer some horrendous slow-down, so with the game nearing completion it's hoped that's been fully sorted out.

Across the fair seas, the US are hoping to see *Hexen* in June and a European release may well follow fairly shortly after. And with its 31 medieval levels and corpse-filled dungeons already *looking* up to scratch, hopes are high for the N64's third first-person shoot-'em-up.

PLANET 64 COMING SOON

an ear to the ground

Probably the biggest news at this month's Tokyo Game Show was the first glimpse of Konami's *Castlevania 64*. It's been known for a while that Konami have several secret N64 games in development, and *Castlevania* is the first to have been officially announced. It looks just as brilliant as we'd hoped, too. The other game Konami have named is *Battle Dancers*, a 3D fighting game. Only some artwork of the characters has been released so far, but, knowing Konami, it should be great.

Nintendo weren't at the show, but work nevertheless proceeds apace on Nintendo's next batch of titles, with *Yoshi's Island 64* and *Kirby's Air Ride* both now scheduled for release (in Japan, at least) this summer. There's also news of a new 64DD game. It's only a name at the moment, though: *Jack and the Beanstalk*.

After Nintendo themselves, probably the most important developers of N64 games are UK-based Rare, the secretive creators of *Killer Instinct* and *Blast Corps*, along with the SNES's *Donkey Kong Country* games. Speculation is rife as to what they're up to at the moment with a 3D *Donkey Kong Country* game the most popular bet. However, word reaches **N64** Magazine that Rare's next big game could, in fact, be a racer codenamed *Dream*. A '90s sequel to the ancient-but-great NES game *RC Pro Am*, anyone?

That would certainly be better than the N64's rather more notorious sequel, *FIFA 64*. But, that aside, it can only be good news that American giant EA have finally reached an agreement with Nintendo and commited themselves to developing a whole herd of new N64 games. There are no titles as yet, but we can inevitably expect 64-bit versions of all EA's venerable sports games. An N64 *PGA* would be particularly welcome. And how about a new *Desert Strike* game?

Another American company, former next-gen-console-hope 3DO, has also decided to develop for the N64. Their first release will be a conversion of *Battle Sport II*, a sort of cross between basketball and 3DO's previous hit, the superb tank-filled *Return Fire*. It's unlikely to be as bullet-packed as the N64 version of *Quake*, though, which is well under way at Id. The Dallas-based Id boys are apparently having trouble cramming in all the levels (a mixture of existing PC ones and new ones) making them the first developers to report size problems.

Finally, back in Japan, will Namco ever completely make things up with Nintendo? The two companies have a tempestuous history together, and it's not certain that Namco will ever publish anything on the N64. The company does have at least two N64 games in development, though. One's a sports game (provisionally named *Namco Baseball*), and the other's reportedly an RPG. No sign of a *Tekken 64*, though…

N64 GO! GO!

N64 RPG NEWS WITH WIL OVERTON



After last month's taster we just couldn't resist telling you some more about Nintendo's big 64DD RPG, so Wil went in search of its creators and asked them to...

Tell me about your Mother...



Pigs out for a rumble! Chances are that you'll encounter more than your fair share of these Buhee, Buhei and Boo warriors in Mother 3.

MOTHER 3: CHIMERA'S FOREST

NINTENDO/HAL	64DD	1	1998	TBA

Alas, though, it seems that nobody is giving much away when it comes to either *Mother 3's* storyline or even if its battles are turn-based.

Nintendo are being suitably inscrutable, stating that the game will include many new gaming experiences whilst avoiding any story elements from the previous two instalments. And as for the name? Well it appears that *'Mother'* doesn't actually mean anything except that author Shigesato Itoi and his team can do pretty much what they want with the game. Nice work if you can get it.

However, scratch the surface and some details (albeit vague) do start to come to light. First of all the game's now got a sub-title, *Chimera's Forest* (which seems to tie-in nicely with the recently-released screenshots you see here), and most of the characters seem to live in a town on the forest's outskirts called Tatsumairai. Add a hero called Luka, a batty professor with a passion for holeless doughnuts and a giant pig army and all we can safely say about *Mother 3* is that it'll be as bizarre and off the wall as the first two games. Time to do some homework and brush the dust off that *Earthbound* cartridge!





No fogged-up pop-up problems for Mother 3. But just what the hell is going on?!! Tell us Nintendo!



Luka, Duster and Salso the monkey deep within Chimera's forest presumably. The atmosphere generated in these woodland screenshots is incredible.



ULTRA RELEASE LIST

The latest information on every Nintendo 64 game currently in development world-wide, updated monthly.

	Game name	Publisher	Type	Country
April				
4	Doom 64	GT	SHT	US
4	Mah Jong University	Koei	TAB	JPN
25	Wave Race 64	Nintendo	RAC	UK
27	Star Fox 64	Nintendo	SHT	JPN
May				
10	Dark Rift	Vic Tokai	FGT	US
15	Robotron X	Williams	SHT	US
30	Wild Choppers	Seta	SHT	JPN
30	Go Go!! Trouble Makers	Enix	ACT	JPN
	Super Real Island	Seta	–	JPN
	64 Ozumo	Bottom Up	SPT	JPN
	Sonic Wings Assault	Video System	SHT	JPN
June				
15	War Gods	Midway	FGT	US
30	Star Fox 64	Nintendo	SHT	US
	ClayFighter 63 1/3	Interplay	FGT	US
	Mario Kart 64	Nintendo	RAC	UK
	ISS64	Konami	SPT	UK
	Rev Limit	Seta	RAC	JPN
July				
1	Robotech: Crystal Dreams	Gametek	SHT	US
	Morita Shogi*	Seta	TAB	JPN
	Multi-Racing Championship	Imagineer	RAC	JPN
	Yoshi's Island 64	Nintendo	ACT	JPN
August				
	Blast Corps	Nintendo	SHT	UK
	Star Fox 64	Nintendo	SHT	UK
	F1 Pole Position	Ubi Soft	RAC	US
September				
	ED	Ubi Soft	–	US
	Mission: Impossible	Ocean	ACT	US/UK
November				
	Cavalry Battle 3000	JSS	RAC	JPN
	Final Doom 2	GT	SHT	US
	Joust X	Midway	STICK	US
1997				
	Biofreaks	Midway	–	US 1997
	Battle Dancers	Konami	FGT	JPN/US/UK
	Blade & Barrel	Kemco	SHT	JPN
	Bomberman 64	Hudson	ACT	JPN
	Attack!	Midway	–	US
	Body Harvest	Nintendo	SHT	US
	Chameleon Twist	Nihon	ACT	JPN
	Creator	Nintendo	TAB	JPN
	Dead Ahead	Optical	–	JPN
	Dracula 3D (Castlevania 64)	Konami	ACT	JPN/US/UK
	Dual Heroes	Hudson	FGT	JPN
	Duke Nukem 3D	GT	SHT	US
	Extreme G	Acclaim	RAC	US
	Final Round 64	Konami	SPT	JPN
	F Thomas 'Big Hurt' Baseball	Acclaim	SPT	US
	Ganbare Goemon 5	Konami	RPG	JPN
	GoldenEye 007	Nintendo	ACT	JPN/US/UK
	Golf	Nintendo	SPT	JPN
	Hexen 64	GT	SHT	US
	Holy Magic Century Eltale	Imagineer	RPG	JPN
	Honkaku Yonin Uchi Majong	Video Sys.	TAB	JPN
	Human Wrestling	Human	SPT	JPN
	Ikazuchi no Goto Ku	Seta	TAB	JPN

Game name	Publisher	Type	Country
Jeopardy	Gametek	PUZ	US
J League Dynamite Soccer	Imagineer	SPT	TBA
Ken Griffey Jr Baseball	Nintendo	SPT	US
Kirby's Air Ride	Nintendo	RAC	JPN
Lamborghini 64	Titus RAC		US/UK
Loderunner 64	Bandai	ACT	JPN
Mace: The Dark Age	AtariFGT		US
MK Mythologies: Sub Zero	Midway	RPG	US
Namco Baseball	Namco	SPT	JPN
Pebble Beach Golf Links	T&E	SPT	JPN
Rebel Moon Rising	Midway	–	US/UK
Saikyo Habu Shogi	Seta	TAB	JPN
San Francisco Rush	Midway	RAC	US
Sim City 2000	Imagineer	SLG	JPN
Soccer 64*	Hudson	SPT	JPN
Super Robot Spirits	Banpresto	SLG	JPN
Tetrishere	H20	PUZ	US
Top Gear Rally	Kemco	RAC	JPN
Ultimate Racer	Acclaim	RAC	US
Ultra Combat	GT	–	US
Wet Corpse	Vic Tokai	–	JPN
Wheel of Fortune	Gametek	PUZ	US
World Championship Wrestling	THQ	SPT	US
XSW-1	Video Sys	–	JPN
3-D Shooting*	Video Sys	–	JPN
Tokon Road	Hudson	SPT	JPN
Legend of Zelda 64	Nintendo	RPG	JPN/US/UK1998
Centipede X	Midway	SHT	US
Jungle Emperor Leo	Nintendo	–	JPN
Jurassic Park 2	Dreamworks	–	US
Quest for Camelot	Titus	–	US
No release date yet			
Aero Gauge	ASCII	RAC	JPN
F-Zero 64	Nintendo	RAC	JPN
Cu-On-Pa	T&E Soft	PUZ	JPN
Jack and the Beanstalk	Nintendo	–	JPN
Hiryuu no Ken Twin	Culture Brain	FGT	JPN
Mahjong Hourouki Classic	Imagineer	TAB	JPN
Macross – Another Dimension	Tomy	SHT	JPN
Mother 3	Nintendo	RPG	JPN
Ultra Descent	Interplay	SHT	US/UK
Virtual Pro Wrestling	Asmik	FGT	JPN
VR Baseball	Interplay	SPT	US
VR Golf	Interplay	SPT	US
Super Mario RPG 2	Nintendo	RPG	JPN
Buggy Boogie	Nintendo	RAC	JPN
Freak Boy	Virgin	ACT	US
Quake 64	GT	SHT	US/UK
Silicon Valley	BMG	ACT	US/UK

* *working title*

KEY

ACT	ACTION	RPG	ROLE-PLAYING GAME	SHT	SHOOT-'EM-UP
FGT	FIGHTING GAME	SPT	SPORT	RAC	RACING
SLG	STRATEGY	TAB	BOARD GAME	ETC	MISCELLANEOUS

TOP 5 IN THE UK

Not a great deal of choice, here in Blighty. Which probably explains *FIFA 64*...

1. SUPER MARIO 64
2. FIFA 64
3. SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE
4. TUROK: DINOSAUR HUNTER
5. PILOTWINGS 64

TOP 5 IN JAPAN

Plenty to choose from across the way in Asia. *Pro Baseball*, though...?

1. BLAST CORPS
2. POWER PRO BASEBALL 4
3. DORAEMON
4. MARIO KART 64
5. SUPER MARIO 64

TOP 5 IN THE USA

Our American cousins just can't get enough of... *Cruis'n USA*?

1. MARIO KART 64
2. SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE
3. SUPER MARIO 64
4. CRUIS'N USA
5. TUROK: DINOSAUR HUNTER

TOP 5 IMPORTS

Which are the best-selling US and Japanese games in the UK, then? Hmm...?

1. BLAST CORPS
2. J LEAGUE PERFECT STRIKER
3. MARIO KART 64
4. TUROK DINOSAUR HUNTER
5. WAVE RACE 64

N64 MAGAZINE

Eager Waiting

Which new Nintendo 64 games are we most looking forward to?

1 → **The Legend of Zelda 64** Nintendo Release TBA



2 → **Starfox 64** Nintendo August (April in Japan)



3 ↑ **Go Go!! Troublemakers** Enix/Treasure May 30th in Japan



4 ↓ **Super Mario RPG 2** Nintendo Release TBA



Super Mario RPG (SNES) shown

5 NEW! **Castlevania 64** Konami Release TBA



6 ↓ **Ganbare Goemon 5** Konami Release TBA



7 ↓ **Mother 3: Chimera's Forest** Nintendo Release TBA



8 → **Yoshi's Island 64** Nintendo June/July in Japan



9 NEW! **Baku Bomberman** Hudson Soft Summer



10 ↓ **International Superstar Soccer 64** Konami June



N64 MAGAZINE

ARENA

REVIEWED, RATED... AND COMPLETED!

WAVE RACE 64



IMPORT

BLAST CORPS



Don your hard hats for Rare's destructive puzzler.

44



Wave Race is so realistic, Zy insisted on playing it dressed only in his elderly wet suit. The smell of hot rubber was something that none of us will ever forget. 28

FIFA 64

Disaster! The first big-name stinker lands on the N64. Stand back and flush.



40

ARENA

Most N64 games tend to appear in Japan and America before they arrive in Europe. We track them down, play them thoroughly and review them immediately, to ensure our readers are fully informed at all times. We'll then also review the UK versions as soon as they become available.

PLAYING IMPORT GAMES

Japanese and American games can only be obtained through specialist importers, and won't work on UK N64s. To play them you'll either need a Japanese or American machine, a modified UK N64 or a universal adaptor. We've not had a chance to review this special cart but, rest-assured, we'll have full news next issue.

Doraemon

The first *Mario* clone is here and despite the cute face and blue atomic status, Doraemon's first venture into 3D is definitely only OK-ish. 52





Human Grand Prix

Despite its technical shortcomings, there's something about *HGP* that we like. Take a trip around the Monaco circuit with Tim. 54

N64 MAGAZINE GUIDE TO SCORING

We play all new Nintendo 64 games thoroughly and, if they're really great, we'll play them through to the end before arriving at a verdict. Our scores are considered carefully, taking into account the high cost of Nintendo games and the incredible capabilities of the N64. Here's how it works:

85% and above

N64 Magazine only awards the most superb games scores of 85% or above. We complete them to make sure they stay great all the way through and, if they do, give them our Star Game award. Games scoring this highly are great to play and show off the N64 fully.

N64 MAGAZINE STAR GAME

84%-70%

Because such high standards have been set by the likes of *Super Mario 64* and *Mario Kart 64*, many otherwise excellent games struggle to match them. While they may still be well worth buying and playing, **N64** scores them strictly.

69%-50%

An irksomely unsatisfying area of the scale, containing games that are merely competent. They'll be playable and moderately entertaining but no more, probably because their developers have failed to grasp what the N64 is all about.

49%-20%

Let scores of less than 50% be a warning to you. These games really are no fun, and do our N64s a disservice.

19%-0%

We hope never to have to explore this scoring extreme, but will exercise it fearlessly if necessary.

THOSE CATEGORIES EXPLAINED

The N64 can produce graphics undreamt of before its arrival, and our 'Visuals' category takes this into account. **9 VISUALS**

Has it got good noises in? And is the music good? Or just annoying? These things matter, they really do. **9 SOUNDS**

How well does the game make use of the N64's amazing hardware? A *Mario*-beater? Or just a PlayStation port? **9 MASTERY**

It may look great, and sound brilliant, but will you finish it in five minutes and never want to play it again? **9 LIFESPAN**

And the big mark at the end is essentially a measure of how much fun you're likely to get out of the game. **VERDICT**

Could this be the first totally immersive racing game? Come on in, the watersh glub blub. Glub.

"So, how do we get that incredible water effect across to our readers?" That was the question in the **N64** office as we thought of ideas for this review. Short of cover-mounting a small sachet of brine, with instructions to spray its salty wetness across the brow while sitting on a friend's revving motorbike reading the issue, we drew a blank.

So thank heavens, then, for last month's **N64** video. Take another peak at *Wave Race 64*, if you can, and let it put you in the mood for what follows. This is not just a game on water, but a game about water...









WAVE



N64 MAGAZINE STAR GAME

Wave Race 64			
NINTENDO			
Out now	64M		1-2
	Controller Pak back-up		On-cartridge back-up
£55			

RACE 64

GO! GO!

AYUMI STEWART
Nationality: American
Age: 21
Sex: Female
Not quite as powerful as she should be, Stewart's speedy starts are countered by her habit of tumbling in the briny after the slightest bump. She's the sort of early leader you favour on easy races as a beginner but gradually abandon, especially when you notice the CPU starting to lose with her too. Nintendo's penchant for hapless blondes is really beginning to stress that culture gap nowadays.

CUSTOM OPTIONS
Ayumi's exceptional acceleration is her outstanding quality and won't be dulled greatly by beefing up the engine to a better top end. Increasing her grip slightly will make the frail, slippery waif less susceptible to spin-outs and collisions but cancels your speed adjustments. Hell, just wax the ski and pray to stay out of trouble.

'HANDY' STEWART
Handling: +2
Engine: +6
Grip: -3
N64's novice set-up has the power to recover quickly from crashes and still catch a distant leader. This makes her ideal for novices in Championship and Two-Player mode. Your mother would probably approve of her, too.

GAME MODES

In its arrangement of courses and challenges, *Wave Race* is oddly similar to the SNES buggy bash *Stunt Race FX* with a slight bias toward the solo player...

Games CHAMPIONSHIP



The solo tourny mode asks you to play as one of the four personalised racers, each boasting their own peculiar qualities and advantages. This in itself can decide whether you'll be playing catch-up or defending the lead as a general strategy (see our profile tips on getting the most from each rider). Your overall standing is decided on a points qualifier basis, and you'll need to win pretty much every race on harder levels to even get a sniff at the final course. As usual in these games, it's never really explained why your competitors aren't disqualified for similar failure.

Championship is divided into three main leagues of difficulty, using the same courses each time but with increasingly complex buoy arrangements and obstacles. Win the Cup on Expert level and – aha! – you'll discover a fourth super-hard Reverse league in which you must race all the courses backwards. It's a testament to the challenge of the ever-changing waters that tackling them in reverse feels completely different.



Games TIME TRIAL

Curiously more addictive than you'd expect, this mode demands course-wise tactics and cleverness as well as old-fashioned honed reflexes to shave small clippings of splinters of seconds from the current leader. Like *Mario Kart*, it works best when you and a friend are constantly leapfrogging in the fastest time record tables, goading each other to exceptional levels of performance.

In our course guide you'll find some of the **N64** office's best times (some good, others not so) for a special reason. First, we want to give you an idea of what you should aim for in your first few weeks of playing the game: you'll find plenty of advice on how we got them in our hints and tips. Second, we want your own times so that we've got somebody else to measure against. Let us know the difficulty and any tricks or custom options you used, too, so that we can share your tidbits with other readers.

COURSES

Seven island courses (including one training level) are available at first. By completing the leagues on Normal and Hard difficulty settings, you'll open up the spangly Twilight City and the vicious Glacier Coast for all other modes.

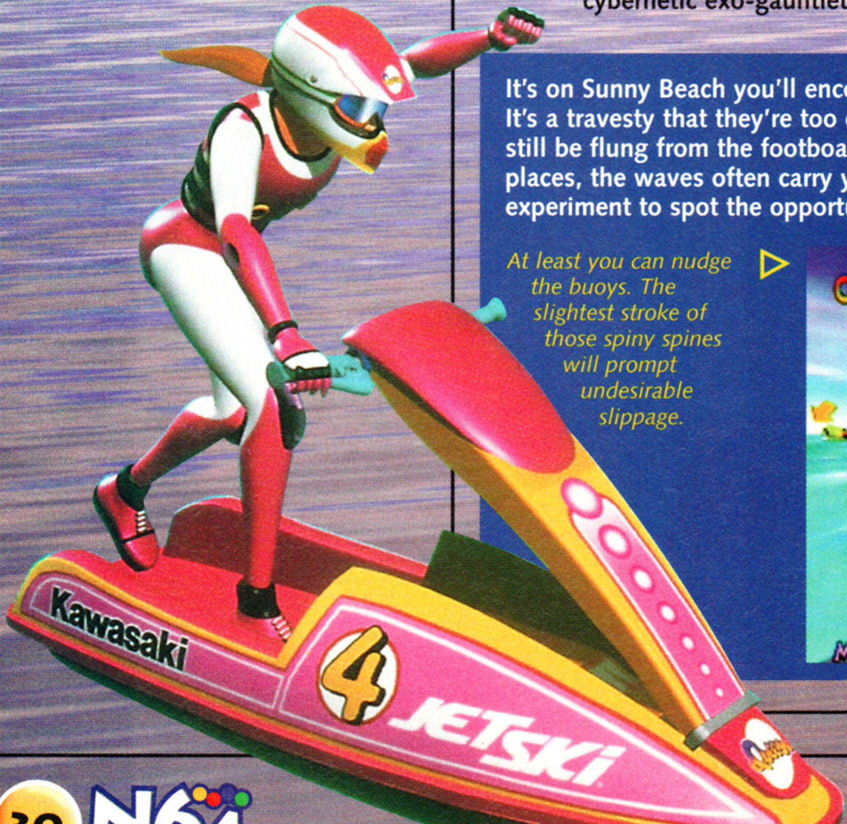
Courses SUNNY BEACH

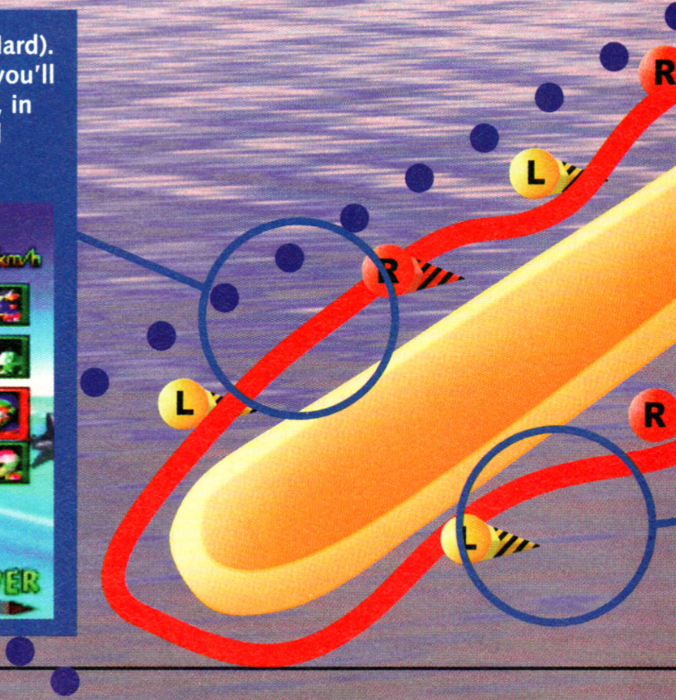
Typically, Nintendo presents this uneventful oval layout to get you accustomed to fast straights and tight turns. We reckon there's another second to lose from our best time, with perfect cornering. And yes, that was the *thunk-fzzt* of **N64** Magazine's cybernetic exo-gauntlet being tossed earthwards in your direction.

It's on Sunny Beach you'll encounter these silver mines for the first time (Hard). It's a travesty that they're too dull to actually explode, as you'd hope, but you'll still be flung from the footboard if you so much as scrape one. Fortunately, in places, the waves often carry you over them. Watch the oncoming tide and experiment to spot the opportunities.

At least you can nudge the buoys. The slightest stroke of those spiny spines will prompt undesirable slippage.







Games TWO-PLAYER BATTLE

Incredibly, the split screen game runs at the same speed as Championship mode, despite having to represent two oceans at once. You can even adjust your camera view, as normal. The compromise is that you lose certain details (gulls and mist, for instance) and have to peer at much less of the course through a clutter of bars and read-outs. Other than that, it's absolutely tremendous. There's nothing like scraping hulls with a chum to really put a keen edge on your determination to win.

Once you've established a clear lead over your rival, **N64** magazine's yah-boo-sucks protocol demands that you slow up and pull a stunt – riding in a handstand, perhaps, or a double backflip – to distract them from their own half of the screen with your antics. It gives them a sporting chance to catch up, you see, or else fall even further behind in their eagerness to verbally compare you with certain unsavoury items and substances.





Games STUNT MODE

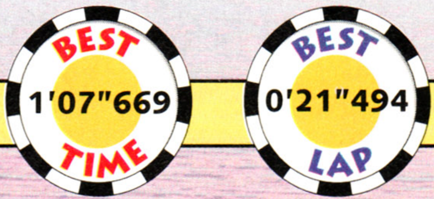
Proving that their control system is the very finest, Nintendo's designers have even incorporated a vast repertoire of ski stunts accessed with particular 'special moves'. With a twirl of the stick your rider will sit on the hood and ride backwards, or perform a handstand on the dashboard. Leap from a ramp and another twiddle can send the whole ski into a backwards flip, perhaps a sub dive under the surface. Each course has a stunt mode variant in which you'll be judged on your varied and athletic performance for a final points score. Stunt rings replace the buoys as course markers, with a points accumulator awarded for each ring you pass through.

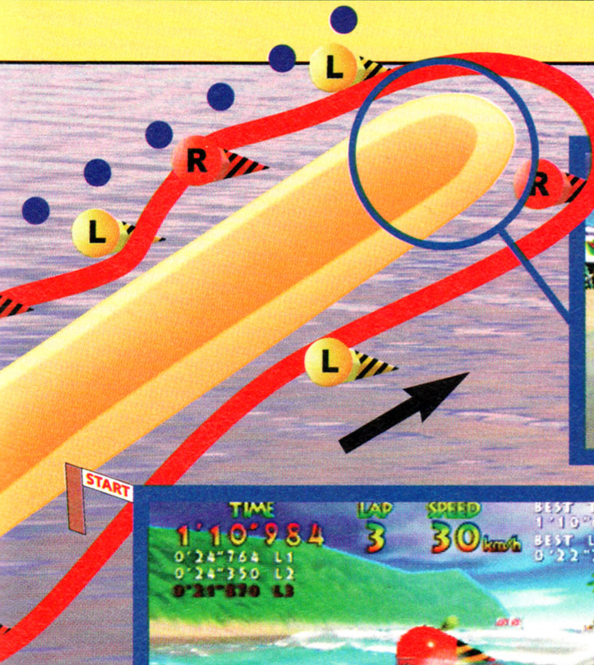
Although it's the weakest section of the game, perhaps because there are rather too many courses to which you could devote your efforts indefinitely, it certainly maintains the *Wave Race* competitiveness. Our current score for Dolphin Park is 15737, and getting better all the time: try pulling a few extra tricks on the later waves if you want to beat us.

RYOTA HAYAMI
Nationality: Japanese
Age: 18
Sex: Male
Presumably the racer that Shigs always uses, although it's a thumb rule of videogaming that the default character is often the best to learn anyway. Hayami's all-rounder abilities make him the most affable rider throughout the game, though you might have a struggle on Expert without a little customisation.

CUSTOM OPTIONS
His handling and grip are slightly tight and a gradual lowering will benefit the overall performance. Improve his engine's top end slightly to start, lots when you learn the straights and aren't prone to falling off. Being a general character, Hayami gives you the greatest freedom to soup-up his engine.

ADVANCED HAYAMI
Handling: -2
Engine: +3
Grip: +3
N64's Hayami is built for Championship racing. Using our minor modifications you'll have smoother steering, high speed and jostle-resistance without needing to change your usual Hayami tactics.





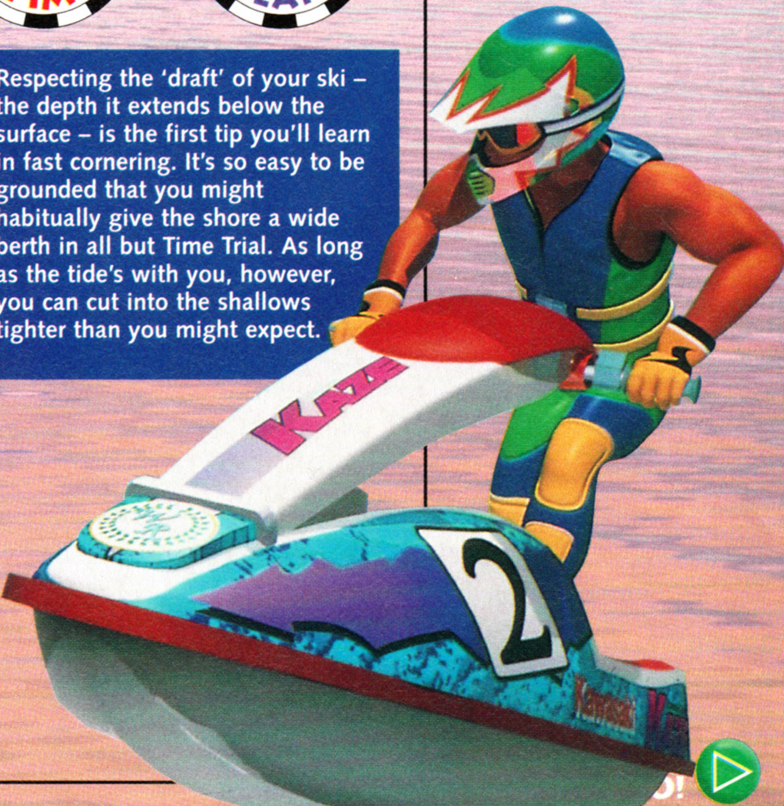


Respecting the 'draft' of your ski – the depth it extends below the surface – is the first tip you'll learn in fast cornering. It's so easy to be grounded that you might habitually give the shore a wide berth in all but Time Trial. As long as the tide's with you, however, you can cut into the shallows tighter than you might expect.



On the last straight before the line, a 'bore' current will start to overtake you. You'll feel the current grip you, but try pushing forward a little to really get a slide over the crest (Normal).

Actually we've just pushed our best lap below 0'21". You'd better get a move on.



MILES JETER
Nationality: Canadian
Age: 24
Sex: Male
They call him Mr Tightcircle for (phew) his jetskiing prowess on the corners. In one innocent moment you'll try this chap out and go veering off to one side, no longer certain where the rest of the world went. His hypersensitive steering can scare smaller players and evades most heat-seeking missiles, making him the slalom king.

CUSTOM OPTIONS
Severely compensate for that trademark turn-on-a-penny handling and he's suddenly controllable by us mere mortals, though still a rider you need to practise and respect. Engine acceleration is second to Ayumi's and could do with slightly more top end. Definitely the specialist of the game, and an acquired taste to boot.

HEAD OVER HEELS JETER
Handling: +6
Engine: +3
Grip: -3
N64's stylised stuntman is the ideal choice for experimenting with wild moves. Use our set-up to pull off those triple flip or helicopter double stunts.



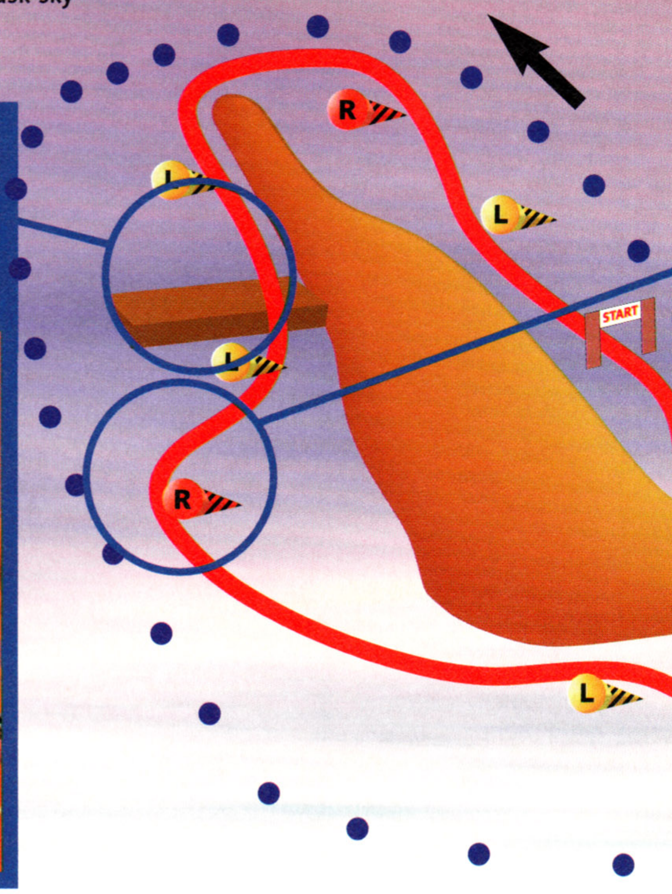
Courses SUNSET BAY

We're not sure about the Lucozade ocean, but the lens flare from its lazy dusk sky makes up for it in photogenic opportunities. This is where you'll learn the importance of gauging early turns to negotiate tight 90°+ corners.



It doesn't matter too much if you damp your flight from this ramp or not, as you'll lose speed intermittently in the following surf anyway. On harder leagues, look for the arrows indicating distant buoys and twist right in mid-air so that your ski is set up for the ideal line even before you land.





Courses DRAKE LAKE

The calm, fast surface of an inland lake provides an opportunity to test your slalom skills. Visibility improves with each circuit, but for a buoy-scrapingly good Time Trial, you'll need to rely on course knowledge to counteract the morning mist.

The reeds around the mud island can sap your speed to an extraordinary degree, so take the broader, right-hand route and cut in tightly for the yellow buoy. It means you take the next corner wide but this just sets you up on a perfect approach for the slalom.

Frogging in the fronds: it might look much longer on the map, but this is definitely the route of champions.





Take the slalom straight on or you'll never recover from having to make that first turn a bit too tight. Such are the tough realities of racing.



3D Deathcrash lives! With diligence, you'll find there's a clear line through the wooden posts on every difficulty without missing buoys. On the last lap of Championship, though, try to keep enough spare misses to ignore it completely if you're jostling with other skis.

Why, if this isn't one such line. Make the first two laps and you can cut inside on third.

BEST TIME 1'14"485

BEST LAP 0'23"341



The following slalom is susceptible to the skipping rule on higher difficulty Championship, as you can regain Max Power on the very next section while your respected rivals are negotiating the last buoy.

"My eyes! Can't see!" Jeter sneaks past with an old dogfighting tactic.

If you've not made any misses by the last lap, dodge the final buoys and cut in straight for the finish (Easy). You only have to pass by the posts, not necessarily between them, to cross the grid: so by the time the computer decides to cut your Max Power, you can be dashing between the right-hand post and the pink perimeter buoys with mere inches to go.

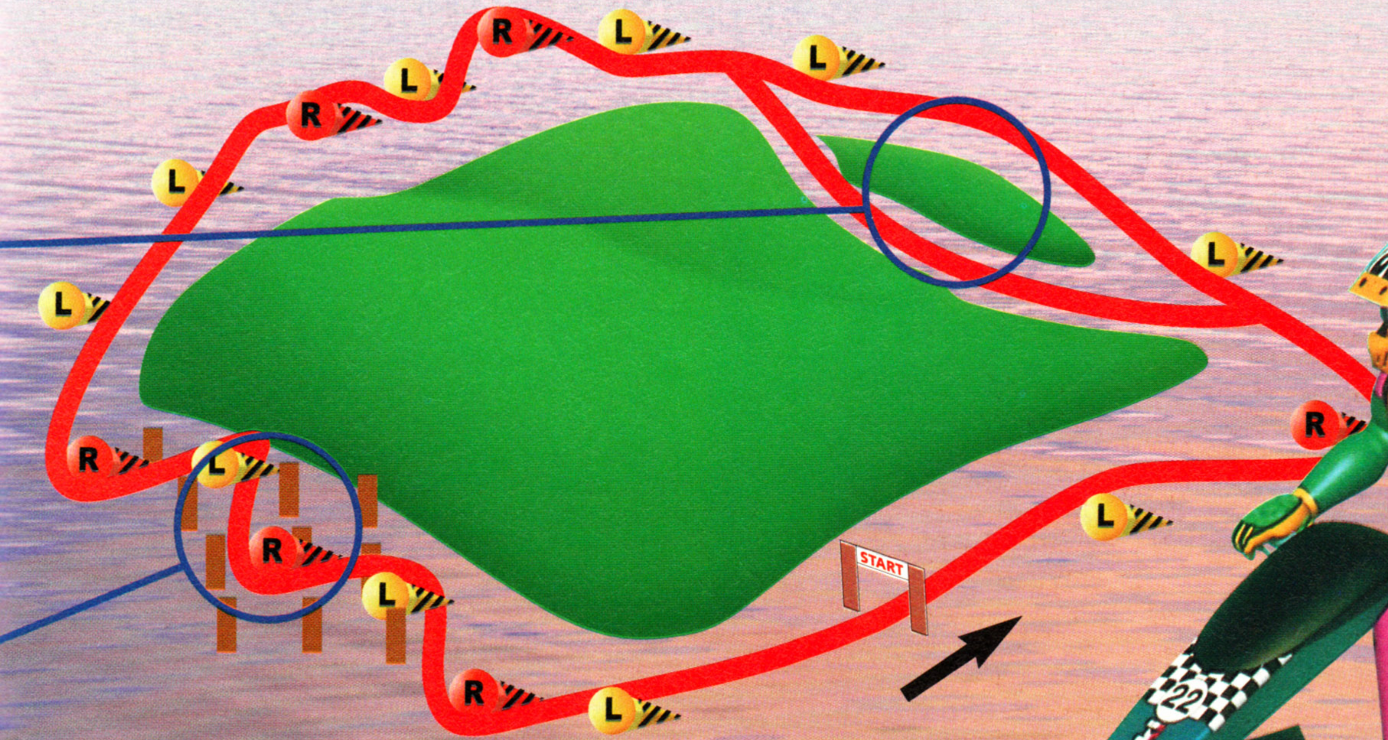




Heh heh heh, like I care! Shed no tears for those poor CPU saps forced to play by the rules. Or something.

BEST TIME 1'20"886

BEST LAP 25"734



DAVID MARINER
Nationality: American
Age: 32
Sex: Male

Say hello to Big Wave Dave. He's the fastest jetman alive, slowly building up speed to move from last place to an uncatchable first. He's the master of collisions, barging through the huddled pack and scattering riders. He's a large fellow with a comical froggy helmet that says "Hey hey, I'm a joker!" Sadly, he also comes from a bizarre non-Euclidean dimension where corners do not exist and accelerating is something you put off till tomorrow.

CUSTOM OPTIONS

Improve his engine dramatically towards Dash. On the calm he might be able to beat 130 kmh, but if he never gets a chance to build up to it then it's worthless. What you're looking for is a trade-off between the maximum speed on straights and the quickest recovery from cornering, something you can tailor to the course in question. On such a powerful motor, an increased grip and lighter steering can pay dividends in the hands of an advanced player.

TIME TRIAL MARINER
Handling: -2
Engine: -5
Grip: +3

N64's recommended set-up is a clock-eating MONSTER. Try out this custom jobbie in Championship or Time Trial and you'll break all your previous cherished records. *Dave Race 64*, more like.



GO! GO!

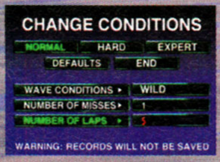
SPEED START AGAIN!
Practically a tradition for Nintendo racers, isn't it? By hitting the accelerator on the starting grid at just the right time, you can earn yourself an extra burst of vital oomph. The closer you are to the announcer saying "Go!", the higher the



reading on your Power Bar. Our tried and tested technique is to ignore the commentary, watch the red lights and count them off 1, 2, 3... to get the right rhythm. On the count of 4 and the green light you hit the throttle and (hopefully) start the race with Max Power and a reassuringly throaty engine growl. It can account for whole seconds on those Time Trial records.



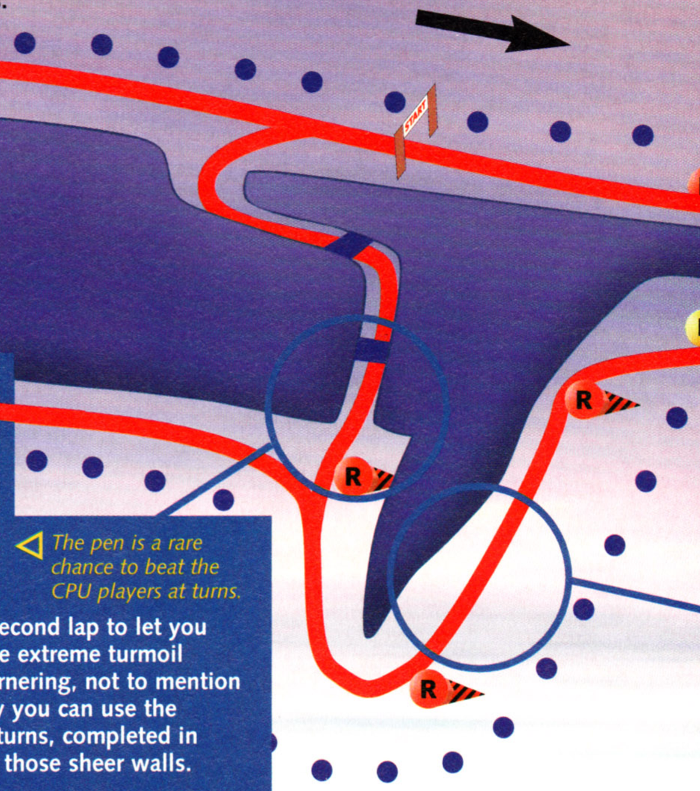
HIDDEN OPTIONS
Some of those option screens won't become available until you've won all of the Championship leagues. When you do, we recommend Versus battles with miserly three-buoy skipping and regular cries of "Geroff!" You can also change the wave conditions for each league, calming the waters of Marine Fortress, storming up Drake Lake or even making the going random for a good old-fashioned challenge.





Courses MARINE FORTRESS

Storm-laden skies herald an unrelenting riptide in *Wave Race's* grimmest course. The constant choppiness can be exploited, however: those challenging features and pray-to-God shortcuts make it ideal for Time Trial rivalry on the record tables.



These arches hold no fathomable strategic military purpose, and may even compromise the impenetrability of the stronghold. Damn those fools at GCHQ. Boasting the 'calmest' waters of the course, this section will habitually dupe you into turning late, spitting you out wide on the final stretch. Don't be a gobbet.



Those rank icons on the right can also show when a racer has crossed the finishing grid or even fallen in the drink.



The pen is a rare chance to beat the CPU players at turns.

The iron gate will rise on the second lap to let you cut through the pen (Hard). The extreme turmoil dashes any hope of smooth cornering, not to mention frail human bodies. Fortunately you can use the turbulence for very tight early turns, completed in mid-air, to avoid a scrape with those sheer walls.

Courses PORT BLUE

No matter how hard we try on the ramps, we just can't smash into the helicopter that dogs your progress Goodfellas fashion. This industrial course is fast and furious with an emphasis on obstacles and hard terrain cornering rather than wavery trickery.



Normal Course: you'll be forced to take the long tunnels, cutting through a drum-littered loading zone. Try for the close inside-straight rather than a curving detour around the pylons.

Hard/Expert Course: The smaller tunnel offers the fastest route IF you can maintain full speed for a constant turning radius (semi-circle right, semi-circle left, for an S). Slowing down will only ruin the turning circle you need to hold, and a crash here is disastrous for troublesome recovery reasons. Even Mariner can manage this tunnel if you pull down on the stick after straightening out from the first semi-circle and roll it to down-left for a tighter turn.



This is a collision hot spot. Come off just once and you'll block half the tunnel, so if there's a ski right behind you...

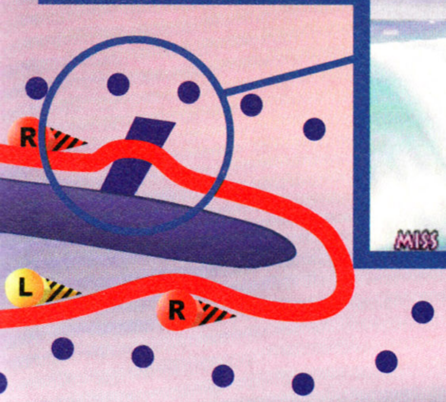
BEST TIME 1'24"788

BEST LAP 0'25"382

Bless my sideburns, I appear to be crashing through the wreckage of an Onedin Line episode. ▷



The main shortcut is on the very first stretch. Instead of veering around the concrete tide-break crossing your path, race at full pelt towards it and pull back to leap from the big waves. This works *most* of the time (heh heh). The skill rests in judging which breaker to use, perhaps holding off in the hope of a closer, faster one; and how far to pull back, so that you don't spend half an hour chatting to gulls.





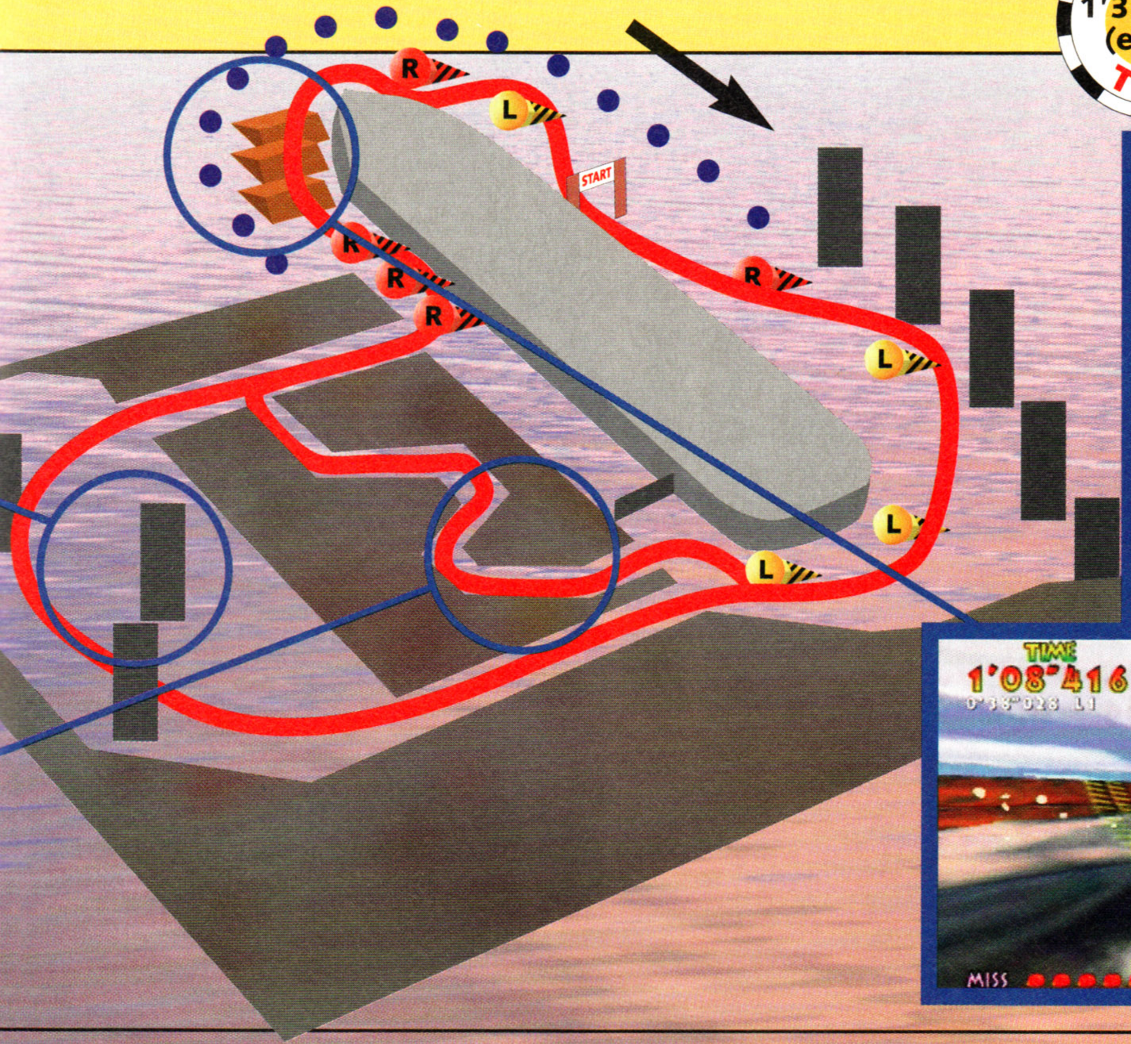


This corner is booby-trapped with flotsam, increasing in quantity on higher difficulties. In our devil-may-care fashion we still recommend dashing through the centre rather than steering wide, gambling that the semi-visible planks (you'll think of earthier titles, on acquaintance) will be well below the surface should you stray.

Dave shows how to clear a plank. Don't try this without a lucky clover or benign personal deity. ▷

BEST TIME 1'33"275 (euch)

BEST LAP 0"29"412



Pressing B just before taking the ramps at the prow of the supertanker will dampen your jump and reduce the time spent catching air. Try to follow the tanker's hull where it sharpens to a point and you'll be able to leap off the side of the ramp with little or no jump at all. This is how the CPU players manage to turn so fast here.

Knowing that I'm almost last, the temptation to plant my ski in his blades is dizzying. ▽



SALTY DOWSING

Should you fall off your jetski after some hefty collision, it can often seem that the computer players recovers suspiciously quickly while you're left gulping brine for an age. The remedy is simple: you can hasten your rider's clamber back onto the footboard with rapid hammering of the accelerator A button.



DRIFT AWAY

Press the R button when cornering and your rider sticks a foot in the water, holding your position for a very subtle skid-out. Handy if you take a corner too early, it seems, but – puzzlingly – we've never used it, or felt its need, and it certainly didn't contribute to our best times. Not ashamed to admit it, we welcome anyone to enlighten us with a revelation of its major purpose.

DOUBLE FLIP

It took us a while to suss these, but the trick is to actually complete the up-down stick motion when you're only half-way up the ramp. Keep it held down and the flip starts as soon as you're airborne. The same works for the helicopter: do the diagonal motion early, keep it held and you'll level out with an extra flip.

With this knowledge you can even do flips after large waves. Pull back when you hit the wave to use it as a ramp, then do the motion immediately. Most players claim you can only pull a triple flip on the last ramp of Glacier Coast, but we've managed an impromptu triple just before Southern Island's pier (lap 1, Expert).



RIDE THE DOLPHIN
Exchange your jetskis for an intelligent sea mammal with our handy stunt trick. *Ki-ik-ak-chchchch-kuk*, as our dolphin friends would say.

Choose the Stunt Mode and select the Dolphin Park course. If you manage to pull off every basic stunt and qualify without missing a single score ring, you'll hear the dolphins clicking loudly at the end of the race to endorse your performance. Make sure you're getting a score for all of these, especially the sub dive. Just to clarify matters, here's the stunt schedule we used our very selves:
Start to Checkpoint 1: Hoodstand with somersault, riding backwards, handstand
Checkpoint 1 to 2: Clockwise barrel roll, backflip and submarine dive
Checkpoint 2 to end: anti-clockwise barrel roll.

To verify your success, simply reset. The intro cinema should show the racers on dolphins rather than skis. Now skip to the Dolphin Park warm-up in Championship, holding down on the stick while confirming your selection of rider. With your new friend you can do backflips, barrel rolls and sub dives. Uppers: your dolphin steed is now saved to the cart, and you won't need to do that stunt schedule again. Downers: you can only use it here in Dolphin Park – and it's a bit lightweight, to be honest, feeling like you're riding an inflatable toy. *Ch-ch-kakakikkak*, eh?





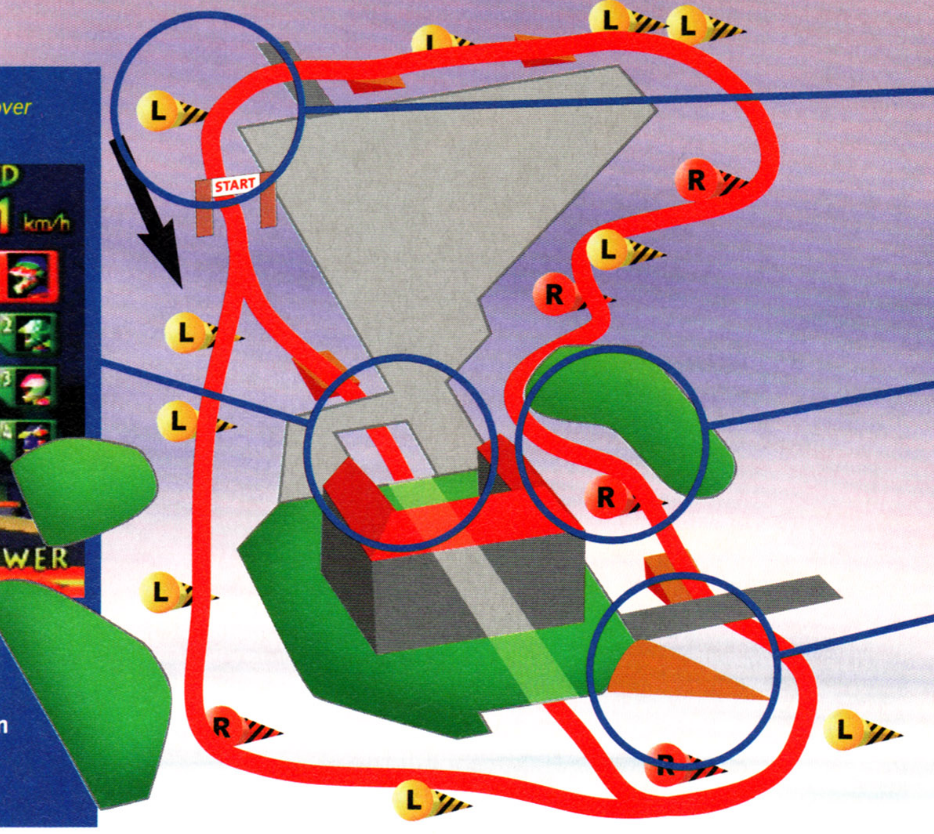
Courses TWILIGHT CITY

A cool, dark evening rampfest with some very narrow ski-jostling bottlenecks to please the assembled crowds. More fast and attractively reflective water, but with deceptive areas of intense backwash (especially on Reverse League) that can lead you to overshoot into its wire fences.

Your pride will be dented somewhat when you discover the cheering audience is made of flimsy cardboard.



Don't be confused into thinking it's impossible: the first ramp actually sets you up for a long submarine dive under the concrete barrier (on Hard upwards), so you'll need stunt skills to win in Championship. Rise as soon as possible by pulling back to reclaim acceleration.



Courses GLACIER COAST

We humbly acknowledge Nintendo's ability to sneak a slippy-slidey ice-world into every game they make, and this example contains enough unforgiving pitfalls to have you making up swearwords after exhausting your usual list. You cruise in first or you crawl in last, there's no middle way to finish.

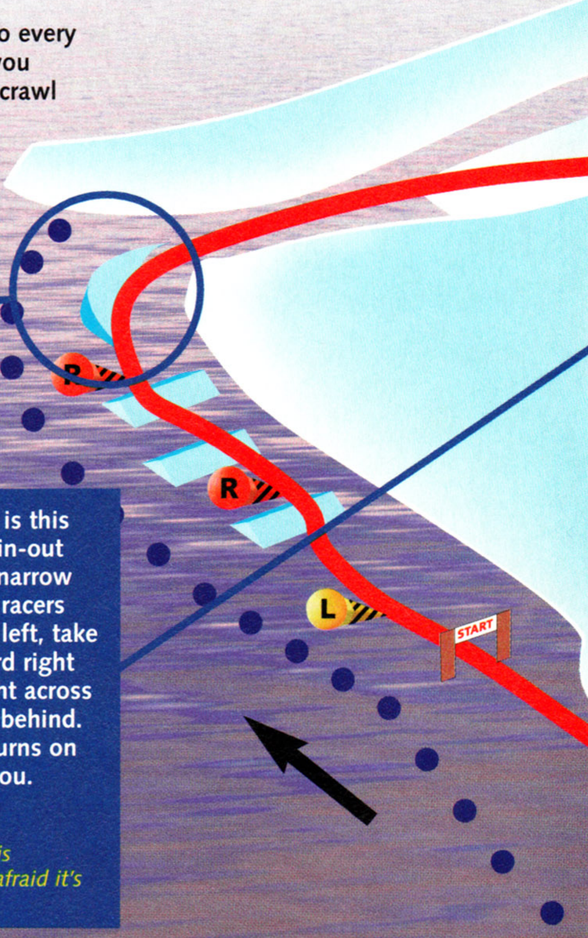
The first turn encompasses a bank of pure frictionless ice leading into a narrow ravine. Beginners should take the outside route, Time Trial contestants will discover the beauty of cutting inside, but NEVER regard it as a true bank and try to use it – except in Reverse League.





The real stumbling point is this sheet of wet ice – the Spin-out Flats – at the end of the narrow channel. Watch the CPU racers and you'll see them turn left, take it wide and then veer hard right to aim themselves straight across before leaving the water behind. They never try to make turns on the ice, and nor should you.

If you find yourself in this precarious position, I'm afraid it's already too late.



BEST TIME 1'34"720

BEST LAP 0'30"914



Reverse League: in Championship it can really pay off to ignore that first lone buoy in the corner on every lap and concentrate on the narrow access to the next straight, leaving the CPU players to collide while you regain Max Power. Another top tip, there and they're all included with the cover price.

Absolutely nobody around to prove my point. Well, that's just marvellous.



Only some of the ramps are essential for clearing major obstacles. If there's a clear path beside them, then you'd do better to maintain speed by learning the placement of the mines and cutting a route straight through (skip ramps 2 and 3 in Time Trial and watch your lap records tumble).



If you do take the ramp, risk an early right rather than sliding out anywhere near the hull-sucking yellow sand bank.

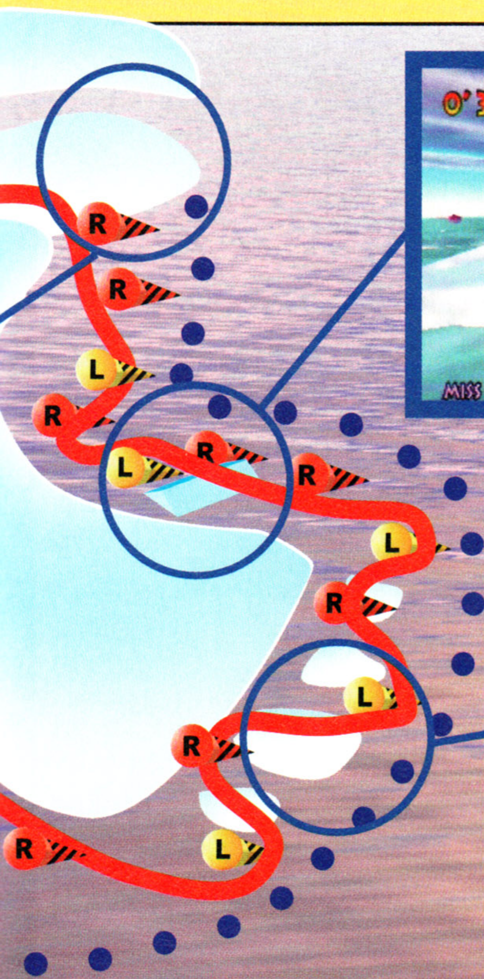
After the first tunnel, you can take a shortcut by holding the turn and skidding across the grey clay bank. Unlike the yellow sand banks, it won't clog your engine.



Stretching the realistic limits of jetskis just a tad,but what the hey?

BEST TIME 1"35"298 (akk)

BEST LAP 0'29"862





The last ramp on Glacier Coast is also the biggest in the game, if you're looking to practise triple flips. The ensuing slalom across icy discs conceals a perfect line that can be tackled with subtle seat-shifting left and right if you find the correct approach.

Look, you can almost see the line from here. Miss it and you won't recover Max Power for half a lap.

Smashing into these ice humps will at least remove them from the course (bump somebody else into one if you can manage it). They're often hard to spot in time, such that playing with the most distant camera view will make an incredible difference to your performance.



DOLPHIN CHASING

Here's a little something you may not have noticed on Dolphin Park. Start the Championship warm-up with any jetski. From the start, follow the dolphin from a close distance as it describes two circuits that take it around the small island, then around the rock arch, returning to the pier each time. If you fall off, screw up or overtake at any point then you've failed. On its third venture it will loop out to approach the ramps. Watch closely and repeat whatever stunt it performs on the ramps (a simple jump, if you're lucky). Pursue it through the arch, back to the pier, and the dolphin will indicate if you mimicked it closely enough by performing a leaping somersault. Repeat this entire process without fault and a baby dolphin will join the throng. Further successes will attract up to three calves following the adult along.

We've heard that you can even invite the Killer Whale to join the entourage by dolphin-copying perfectly for long enough (about 30 consecutive circuits), but must admit that our patience failed us. Besides, the dolphin seems to screw up the stunts itself sometimes.

GO! GO!

CHANGE RACING COLOURS
When two human players choose the same rider in Versus mode, you'll see one of them decked-out in a different colour scheme. To choose this alternative strip at any time in the other modes, simply hold up on the stick while confirming your selection of rider.



WHEELIES
Most people have missed this minor stunt, probably because it's completely useless. Cruise slowly, gently ease back and start tapping the accelerator on and off until the nose of your ski rises. Maintain this speed by modulating your tapping rate and stick angle and you should be able to 'wheelie' for a fair stretch. It'll earn you no points, but we mention it because it demonstrates the quality of control over the vehicles that *Wave Race* grants with just a stick and a button (and no gearbox complexities, note). Your little rider will even slip backwards off the board if you push it too far...

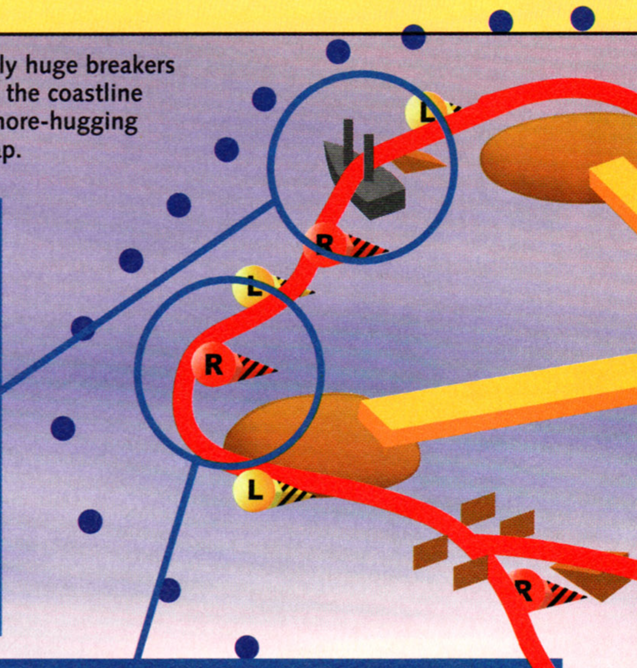
GOD, WE'RE SAD
Here on **N64** we take our gaming trivia seriously, but this... (cough)... Oh, all right. Look at this texture on the wall of Port Blue's big tunnel. Now compare it with the portal room to Hazy Maze Cave in *Super Mario 64*. Uhuh. Let's hope we've pre-empted a few letters, at least.





Courses SOUTHERN ISLAND

This surfer's paradise, home to the impressive killer whale, spawns some truly huge breakers that ever-so-slightly spoil the naturalistic water effect. Its odd feature is that the coastline expands as the tide retreats, making lap times erratic. For a truly excellent shore-hugging record you need to tailor your planned route and tactics to each individual lap.





You can make the leap between the masts of the shipwreck on all three laps if you remember to line yourself up for a speedy ramp approach on the previous corner. Just cut across the prow on the first lap.

The consequent tidal channels will enhance your steering for negotiating the buoys, scuppering those who resist. Don't fight it, just feel it and go with it. Lawks, I'll be calling people 'dudes' next.

These cool breaker channels really are Surf City, if you fancy riding your jetski like a surfboard. Lose that tacky shark's-tooth necklace, though.





I'm not precious about third, but Mariner's not having it. My rolling indicator at work.





Sportingly, Jeter didn't let impending death ruin his stunt roll celebrations.

You get the impression that nobody at Nintendo would be happy designing a racer with an ordinary sports car and a simple stretch of tarmac. They'd have put ramps in *Ridge Racer*; planted bombs on the *Daytona* track; even hidden a playable tractor in *Sega Rally*. And that, possibly, is why we like the rascally scamps.

Early screenshots of *Wave Race 64* even contained bizarre futuristic hovercraft that led many to christen it *F-Zero 2*. A major rethink obviously occurred at some point, and although the appearance of these more mundane jet skis did seem to be tapping the watersports fad seen in last year's coin-ops, it's safe to say that you have never encountered anything like this in an arcade.

And it's all down to those waves. They break, they rise, they ebb and flow, crashing across your footboard or swelling underneath to nudge your bobbing jetski. Okay, so you can guess at a mountain of polygons shifting about in there somewhere. You know that it's all smoothed-over and curved-out with translucent pixel-free textures. You may even recognise that remarkable liquid effect used in *Super Mario 64's* silvery-black pools and ripples of shimmering light breaking across the chaotic surface. After that, you resort to checking the underside of your television for damp spots.

WET PATCH

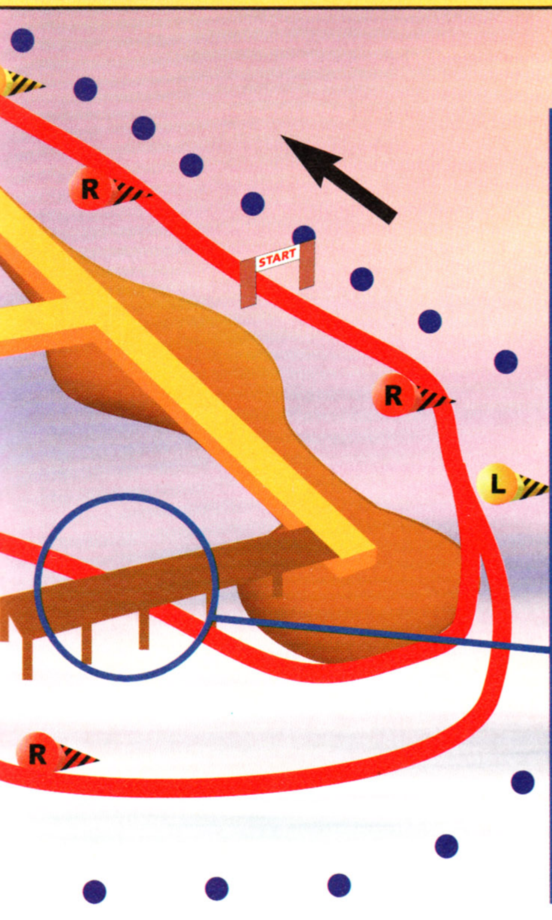
More than this, it's a working model of the ocean surface. On calm waters you can skim at high speed, trailing a mild spray. Stormy riptides are a constant frantic wrestle to ride the peaks and stay afloat. Although certain areas of the 'track' have repeating wave patterns, racing on a surface in perpetual flux provides a completely new racing experience that constantly tests and re-tests the extent of your vehicle control.

Thanks to the power of N64, and the notion that corners can be represented by buoys as well as hard terrain, you can actually see a fair way into the distance, too, and thus plan a course of action that includes rival racers while sticking as close as possible to that perfect 'line'. You'd be surprised how many racing titles slip up on this simple hurdle, expecting you to memorise cornering rather than letting you interact with what you see.

The analogue stick once again provides a sensitive interface, letting you choose whether to turn sharply or curve gently as well as controlling your ski's nose angle when attacking the chops. What makes *Wave Race* so involving is that your actions are perfectly represented on screen by the

BEST TIME 1'22"856

BEST LAP 0'25"909



First lap, high tide, take the long ramp and submarine dive under the pier. Being able to do this stunt shortcut provides your main advantage over the CPU. In subsequent laps you'll be able to ride straight under the pier, cutting as close to the shore as you can. Note that the supporting struts are intangible when submerged (you can dive through them) but fatally solid when exposed.



twisting, leaping ski and its subtly animated rider, giving you precisely the feedback you need to respond. Chugging through a fierce tide, you're actually able to perceive the turbulent effect on your speed and steering and to compensate accordingly with a gentle shift of the thumb. It's probably why so many gamers have described *Wave Race* as a 'realistic' jetski racer, even though they've never actually been placed in charge of the genuine £6,000 article.

BODILY FRAILTY

Character motion is also naturalistic: the daring way the riders lean into corners, pull on the bars or slip from the footboard with a gut-catching "Oof!" brings them alive to such an extent that you'll wince when you smash their frail little bodies into harbour walls, and smile when you ram your rival side-on. Hard to imagine you'd feel this involved with a hovercraft, no?

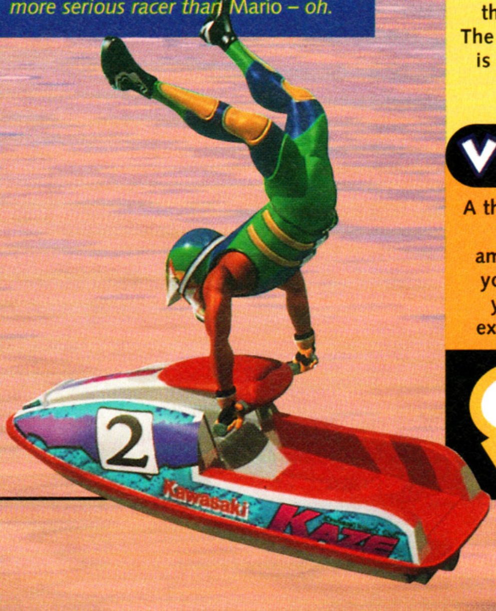
It's a peculiar Nintendo trait that, having come up with a fairly decent game engine, they manage to add yet another design twist or ability that truly makes it their own. In addition to negotiating a basic island circuit, there are left-hand markers (red buoys) and right-hand markers (yellow buoys) that define a subsidiary course. Successfully pass the correct side of a buoy and an arrow is illuminated on your jetski's Power Bar, enhancing your engine performance until "Maximum Power!" puts you in charge of a noticeably superior machine. Miss a buoy, however, and you lose the whole bar at once. Too many misses can disqualify you from the race, but on occasion you'll spot shortcuts where skipping a single marker can actually save time or earn an early finish. Just when you think you've got to grips with the moment-to-moment concentration of tackling the waves, the game presents more tactical decisions about whether to spend time taking a wide corner or dash straight on to catch the leader before it's too late. It is, without a doubt, one of the deepest racing games we've encountered.

In one respect, *Wave Race* parallels the ground-breaking brilliance of *Super Mario 64* in a way that *Mario Kart 64* doesn't. Unless you've actually seen it and played it for yourself, you won't truly comprehend a 3D gaming experience that's only possible with dedicated 64-bit hardware. Consider your gamefreak status temporarily suspended until you own a copy of this groundbreaking title.

ZY



△ *Graphics and control make WR64 a more serious racer than Mario – oh.*



A FREE LUNCH

This is a horrible cheat that will ruin your game. Don't use it, just be aware that it exists and others know of it. And don't think you'll fool us, either.

Start any Stunt Course and perform a simple ski stunt. If you pause the game just after the stunt is completed and the commentator was about to speak, you should hear all sounds go silent except his voice. When you unfreeze the action you'll find yourself awarded a ridiculous number of points, sometimes enough for you to retire to the Algarve. At which point, playing the game properly loses its appeal and you've wasted oodles of cash. Don't do it, y'hear?

There's a version of this cheat which can affect the time on the clock, although the results are rarely convincing. We've said enough, I fear.

9 VISUALS
Too incredible to convey in static screenshots, the swelling, flowing water has to be seen to be believed. And perhaps not even then.

7 SOUNDS
Considerable speech and believable effects manage to atone for its daytime TV filler tunes.

9 MASTERY
Analogue control and naturalistic graphics in perfect harmony. Only the N64...

8 LIFESPAN
I thought I'd be tired of this by now, but no. The two-player potential is a vital contributing factor, though.

VERDICT
A thoroughly innovative and successfully ambitious racer. Until you play it, consider your videogaming expertise incomplete.

90%

DO A JOB ON THEM

The tactics screens in *FIFA 64* do little to aid you in the contest proper...

Team Strategy



Starting Line-up



Simple stuff, really, with chopping and changing the order of the day. Satisfactory, but more effort should have been put into the other areas.

Good in theory, certainly, but where's the option to take your wingbacks down the field? There's very little freedom for individual movement.

Again, limited scope to improve your team's prospects, with Attack, All-out Attack, Normal, Defend and All-out Defend about as good as the strategy gets.

Team Formation

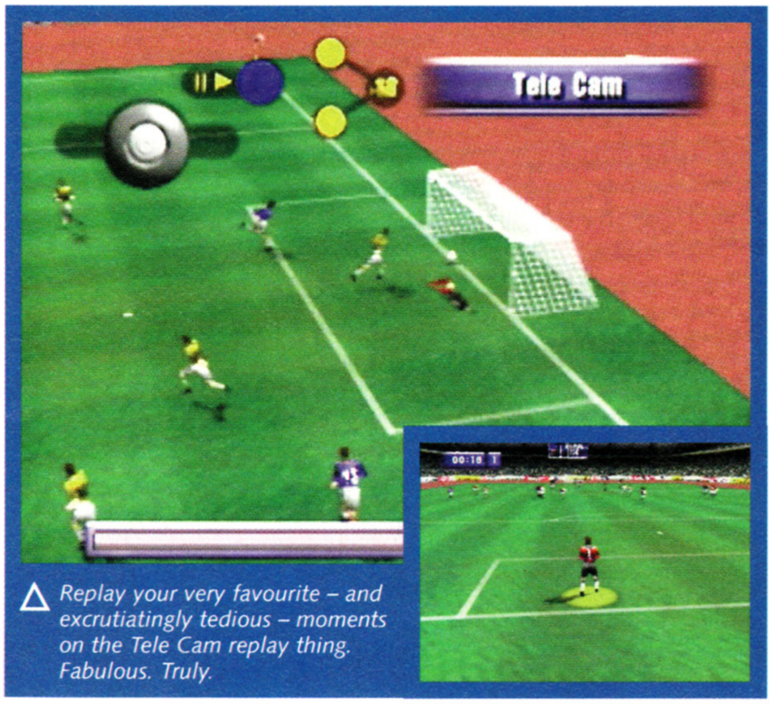


Limited to only six playing formations? Where, pray tell, is 5-3-2? The Sweeper formation isn't even a proper Sweeper system for Jimmy Hill's sake.



Adjusting position

FIFA 64



Replay your very favourite – and excruciatingly tedious – moments on the Tele Cam replay thing. Fabulous. Truly.

FIFA 97 on the PlayStation was rubbish. The N64 version, though, should provide some respite. Or so you'd hope...

FIFA 64
ELECTRONIC ARTS
Out now | 64 M | 1-4
Controller Pak back-up | ~~cartridge back-up~~
£59.99

Ah, yes, the *FIFA* series. Plainly, yearly 'reinventions' haven't benefited its cause. Whereas once we may well have rejoiced at the sight of real players and real teams performing in sprite-based harmony, last year and even more so this, we found ourselves just a tad embarrassed by the sight of 22 stumbling, anorexic polygons plodding about the pitch like a Brighton-bound bus load.

Therefore, you'd assume that an opportunity to address the subsequent skinful of criticism would be top of EA's agenda. And, yet, much of what made *FIFA '97* on the PlayStation so disastrous remains in this N64 incarnation. Even with twice as much power to play with, *FIFA 64's* Canadian developers have done nothing about the pace of the game, the lack of control or the highly suspect goalkeepers. Worse still, the changes that *have* been rung through the game





It's fantastic how EA have managed to achieve this frosted glass look.

The stadium's actually quite nicely designed...



... but, alas, the game isn't and although the players try hard...



... they fail miserably in their attempts to make football enjoyable.



The game's already out and, no doubt, some have hastily snapped it up. It's a shame they weren't warned in time.

DEATH PENALTY

Penalties in *FIFA 64* are disastrously random. Whereas *Perfect Striker,* once again, rewrote the post-extra time rigors of winning the day, EA's effort relies more on getting to grips with the inconsistent controls.

The main problem is that when you tap the shoot button, the player takes a couple of seconds to react. As a result, you panic and try another button in the hope of producing something resembling a shot only to see your player sky one into the stand. Great.



Placing the ball on the spot, Arsenal – in change strip – attempt to win the match on penalties.



Unfortunately, Martin Keown temporarily forgot that he has absolutely no skill whatsoever...



... and, sadly, Liverpool capitalise with Fowler burying an unstoppable cpu strike...



... still, "Big" Den Bergkamp shows the way with a nuclear warhead of a penalty...



... Liverpool win, though and Roy Evans comments: "Hmmmph... pfff... Fowler... hmmm... gaaaa..."

amount to nothing more than superficial additions to the options menu.

The '*FIFA 64* Cam', for example, offers nothing that wasn't originally available, while the one seemingly-rosy element, the 'Picture-in-Picture' view, turns out to be a bit of a lame dog. Included to give the player a separate view of what's happening further on down the field, the 'PIP' is far too big, and seriously hampers the main action. Other features, including goal nets that billow out in the most ludicrous fashion, and limited, isometric tactics screens, add further to the disappointment. Finally, the N64's clever ability to pixel-blur close objects has only been used to give proceedings an unbearable, strangely fuzzy look. Acceptable in the less useable viewpoints but annoying when using the preferred Tele Cam.

But, for that, the mouldiest parts of *FIFA 64* are those left over from previous versions. The speed of the game is infuriatingly slow. Even the advent of a speed-up button does nothing to encourage pacy wing play or break away goals, as a press of that very same button equates to only the tiniest injection of extra leg work.

The controls, too, are frankly awful especially after the silken C-button-driven *Perfect Striker*. *FIFA 64* seems incapable of deciding which button does what, with a tap of the pass button not necessarily leading to its natural conclusion. Instead, the ball frequently balloons off into the stand. Tackling also lacks any conviction, with wayward foot-ins just about as close as you're going to get to emulating Adams or Southgate. The final insult, though, is that every step in The Dave Beasant Guide To Goalkeeping has been included, opening the way for ridiculous Sunday League-like scores as the 'keepers consistently let balls sail between their legs.

The problem *FIFA 64* has is that, due to its combined flaws, it never allows you to become even competent at the game. Each individual match is won via a different set of controls so, much of the time, you're fishing around in murky old waters of trial-and-error trying to fathom out how to work even the simplest of footballing things.

Thus, it won't take players long to realise the consequences of any hasty decision to part with *FIFA 64*-directed cash. The tragedy is that EA have such a wonderful chance to impress – this does have Premiership players, after all – and, once again, they've completely missed the boat. Tsch! If only Konami had managed to get the licence...

TIM

FEVER PITCH
Football – thank the flamin' heavens – is likely to be given a good run-out on the N64. With *ISS64* forthcoming and this pile of old tat already on the shelves, what else can we look forward to this year and next...?

J-LEAGUE DYNAMITE SOCCER
Imagineer's fat-fest football game pits the player – for the Japanese release, at least – in the middle of a J-League battle field. Unlike the FIFA licence, the J-League is available to a number of companies and Imagineer (who will probably go through Ocean in Europe) have taken it and turned Grampus Eight's finest into plumper *Super Soccer*-esque characters. Likely to be grinful, but how playable is another question entirely...

ACTUA SOCCER
If rumours are to be believed, Sheffield's Gremlin are already hard at work on a 64-bit refurbishment of their 3D football game. With the dulcet tones of Barry Davies at the helm, this was always the purists' choice and, although nothing has been confirmed (and won't be until at least the winter), Gremlin do admit to having projects scheduled for 1998. We await with interested faces.

FIFA '98
The news of next year's inevitable outing isn't surprising, and its confirmation is probably enough to strike fear into even the sternest of hearts. However, in an effort to improve the stale *FIFA* licence, EA have sent a number of their British contingent over to Canada to oversee the development of the next version. The hope is that a spot of Blighty-based inspiration may do the series some good. "We can only hope" sighs the world.

GO! GO!

SOCCER 64
Unlikely to maintain its catchy working title, Hudson's football game is being developed currently without any sign of a J-League endorsement. The style of the game is likely to be similar to *Dynamite Soccer*, with the players appearing cartoony and chunkier. Details that have emerged involve the design of an all-new on-pitch manoeuvre entitled the "Rocket Dash", but, sadly, little else is currently known. More soon.

PETER SPILTON

If *Perfect Striker's* athletic stoppers were Premier League-like in their expertise then *FIFA 64's* can only lay claim to a fleeting appearance as the Screwfix Western League incarnate. And here, as they say, is why...

Presumably in an effort to spice up proceedings with a couple of 'unexpected' goals, the goalkeepers in *FIFA 64 never* take to incoming shots with their legs together. Instead, emulating a particularly feisty cossack, they approach spherical arrivals with legs akimbo and then pretend it wasn't their fault when a toe poke hits the onion bag.

Thanks to some sort of "I Can't Believe It's Not Butter" sponsorship deal, the goalkeepers are forced into smearing the contents of several large tubs onto their gloves. Thus, even the tamest of trickler are frequently spilled and an outstretched palm that makes contact doesn't necessarily mean a save. THIS MAKES THE GAME *VERY* IRRITATING.

The final insult is when a shot powers in towards goal – at head height – and your 'keeper makes absolutely no attempt to use his hands. The subsequent travelling of the ball over and sometimes even *through* his head means that, finally, you find it in your heart never to forgive the programmers for basing their goalkeepers on The Invisible Man.


Bursting through, Romario unleashes one...


... shouldn't be too much trouble for the Irishman...


... nope, really, it shouldn't be too much trouble...


... no – honestly, now – joking-aside and that...


... well, at least make an effort to save it... please...


... any effort... at all... even a little... please...


... oh... okay... guess we'll just have to try a bit harder now.


The Irish are on the attack, though...


... and well-known cockney Irishman Cascarino shoots...


... looks like the goalie has it covered, though...


... hmm... well, he's diving late for it but, well...


... he's going to get a hand to it so that's fine...


... um... the ball is... well... it's... going... in...


... even though the goalkeeper had it... covered. (Sob!)


Brazil seek out an instant repost...


... uncertain defending by the Irish lets Juninho in on goal...


... and he has a pot. The Irish are playing "dead lions"...


... still, they're allowed a bit of fun once in a while...


... especially when it's meat and drink to the goalkeeper...


... ha! But you never expected him to take on Riverdance qualities...


... and, thus, victory is secured. (Sound of gun being loaded.)

VISUALS 3
Consistently disappointing especially after (sigh) *J-League Perfect Striker.*

SOUNDS 5
Some dreary hip-hop and Ly, Motty and the lad Gray turn out to be disappointing muffles.

MASTERY 4
Pfff. It's slow, it's looks horrible and it plays like Hull City. ICIS League.

LIFESPAN 6
Riddled with faults and tries its very, very best to make you never want to play it again.

VERDICT
The more you play, the more you realise how thoroughly dreadful things are. Makes playing football a dreary task. Criminal.

39%

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PLEASE NOTE THAT THE DATES QUOTED HERE ARE STRICTLY PROVISIONAL AND CHANGES MAY OCCUR

Attack!	August	Joust X	July
Blast Corps	August	Killer Instinct Gold	July
Biofreaks	November	Legend of Zelda 64	October
Centipede X	September	Mario Kart 64	June
Clayfighter	Autumn	Quake 64	October
Doom 64	August	Robotech: Crystal Dreams	November
Goldeneye 007	July	Silicon Valley	June
Int Superstar Soccer 64	May	Starfox 64	August

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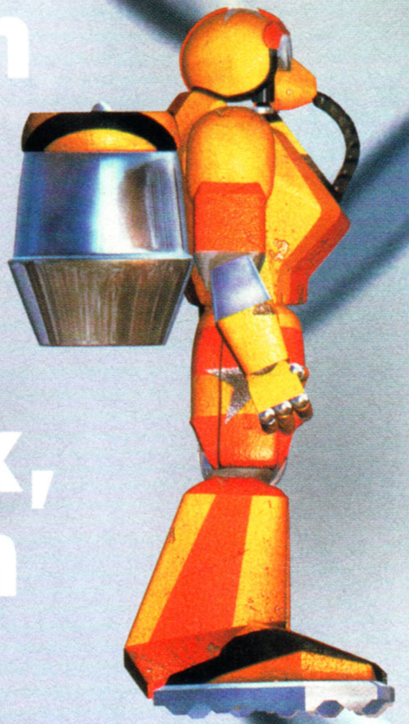
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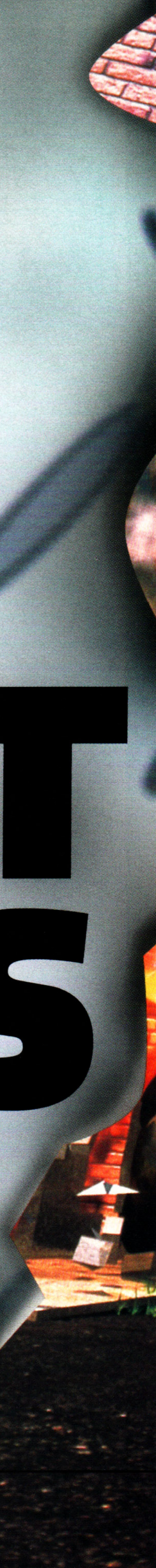
IMPORT ARENA

From this page on, every game reviewed in **N64** is only available on Japanese and US import. We'll do more in future issues on any that're released in the UK.

Angry? Then smash a crate. Tear down a house. Heck, demolish an entire city.



BLAST CORPS



Blast Corps		
RARE/NINTENDO		
Out now	64M	1
August	Controller Pak back-up	On-cartridge back-up
¥6800 (Approx £35)		

N64 MAGAZINE STAR GAME



Here's how it works

BLAST CORPS

THE STORY

Okay. Brace yourself. There's a nuclear missile carrier – right? – and it's carrying a pair of defective missiles to a place where – for some reason – they must be detonated safely. Except, they've started leaking. Yes. So… the missile carrier has become damaged, and – no, really – has started to drive… itself… automatically… to… the… detonation… site. Er. And also, it's taking the most direct route, through towns and cities. And, er, if anything blocks its path the missiles will detonate instantly. For some reason.



WHAT THIS MEANS IN PRACTICE

As a member of the elite Blast Corps, what you've got to do, basically, is clear a path for the carrier. Buildings need demolishing, holes need filling and gaps need bridging. And all the time the missile carrier's inching slowly towards disaster. At the start of each level you're given one Blast Corps vehicle, but you may be able to find other, better ones as you play.



GO! GO!

THE GLOBE

You start *Blast Corps* with one blob on this rotating 3D globe – the first mission. Once you've completed that, 49 more blobs appear. Then a network of missions gradually unfolds, with big blobs for proper truck-expediting missions and little blobs for bonus and training levels. You can tackle these in pretty much any order. Every so often, though, you'll find yourself with just one mission left to complete – a frustratingly tricky one, usually. Complete it and a whole load more blobs (or 'nodes' as they're called in maths) appear, with more missions to tackle.





◁ *After a couple of hours' concerted play your globe ought to be rather more line-filled.*



SIDESWIPE

An articulated lorry with two rams that pop out of the sides.
Pros: Good at driving down roads destroying the buildings on either side, something it consequently spends most of its time doing.
Cons: Can only use its rams a limited number of times. Tricky to manoeuvre, being articulated. Can behave oddly, not bashing down buildings on the side of the road it's closest to.
Special controls: L or R to pop the side rams out.

Speed: 7
Destructive power: 8
Ease of control: 5
Overall: 6

Tip: Try to drive down the exact centre of each street. That way you'll be able to get the buildings on both sides simultaneously.

VEHICLES

Each *Blast Corps* mission begins with you sitting in one of the following vehicles, each of which is designed for a specific purpose. You may come across further vehicles as you play through the mission. If you're good.



BALLISTA

A missile-equipped bike.
Pros: Extremely fast, and can blow things up at long range
Cons: The missiles aren't all that powerful, and are hard to aim accurately.
Special controls: L and R to launch a rocket. Like *Doom*! Or not.

Speed: 9
Destructive power: 6
Ease of control: 5
Overall: 7

Tip: By accelerating and braking suddenly it's possible to get the bike to rock backwards and forwards and consequently fire missiles upwards and downwards.

RAMDOZER

A bulldozer that can either push buildings over or, if they're too big, push TNT crates into them.
Pros: Easy to control. Can knock down small buildings quickly and easily just by driving into them.
Cons: Not terribly fast. TNT-pushing can be frustratingly erratic, with crates sliding sideways for seemingly no reason.
Special controls: L and R blow the horn.

Speed: 6
Destructive power: 8
Ease of control: 8
Overall: 8

Tip: The faster you're going the more damage you'll do.



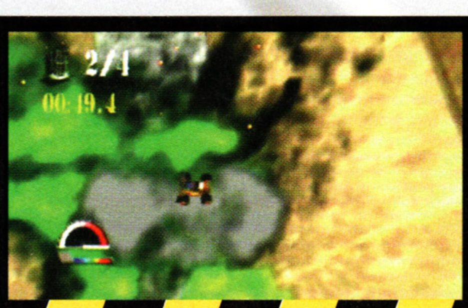


SKYFALL

A buggy that relies on speed to bash things down. For best effect, drive it up a slope and come haring down towards your target.
Pros: Fast and nippy, and fun to zoom about in.
Cons: Bumps about a lot, making it tricky to steer accurately. Weedy.
Special controls: L and R for a turbo speed boost thing.

Speed: 8
Destructive power: 4
Ease of control: 5
Overall: 4

Tip: Come zooming down an embankment towards your target, and then hit the turbo at the last moment.



THUNDERFIST

A giant robotic exoskeleton that punches and somersaults into buildings.
Pros: Easy to control and fearsomely destructive. Fearsomely!
Cons: None – we like 'im.
Special controls: A, B, L and R all do the same: somersault.

Speed: 7
Destructive power: 8
Ease of control: 6
Overall: 8

Tip: Pause and take aim between your tumbles, rather than rolling constantly and missing everything.







BACKLASH

A truck that downs buildings by skidding sideways into them.
Pros: Quite good fun to begin with.
Cons: Annoyingly inaccurate, not skidding realistically at all. Tends to feature in the more boring, repetitive missions.
Special controls: L and R to powerslide.



Speed: 7
Destructive power: 7
Ease of control: 2
Overall: 3

Tip: It's all to do with getting the truck's tail to swing into things



EXTRA VEHICLES

It's not all knocking buildings down. *Blast Corps* also has a few extra bits and pieces for your little bloke to hop in and out of.

CRANES
Used to pick things up – and then put them down again. Good for lifting crates and vehicles over stretches of water and railway tracks. The joystick swivels the arm around, A and B move the hook in and out, and R raises and lowers your load.



TRAINS
The fastest way to get from one side of the playing area to the other. Trains can also carry other vehicles on their flatbed trucks and, when parked in appropriate places, can form bridges across the track. Steering is clearly unnecessary, but L and R toot the whistle.



BOATS
Boats work much like trains, with simple forward and backward controls and a flat area for loading vehicles and crates onto.



CARS
Of very little use, but fun to drive around in, and the hotrod is the vehicle of choice for race course levels. L and R either play Dixie on the hooter or, on the police car, flash the lights and sound the siren. This pleases us.





JUGGERNAUT
You don't actually get to drive this, but you'll find it parked at the end of each level. It's what you hop into when you've completed the mission and want to return to the globe.



HELICOPTER
You can't control the helicopter either. But at the beginning of a mission it'll overfly the carrier's path, giving you a glimpse of what's to come, before dropping you off in the starting position. Then it'll circle overhead looking for survivors.



J-BOMB

A special robot with two fanjets on his back, allowing him to fly up into the air and then stomp on buildings.
Pros: Can crush huge skyscrapers easily. Can fly over long distances rapidly.
Cons: Blemish-free, and a firm favourite. Except, you hardly ever get him.
Special controls: A activates the jets, and B does a stomp.

Speed: 9
Destructive power: 9
Ease of control: 8
Overall: 9

Tip: If you can get J-Bomb to stamp right in the middle of four tower blocks, he'll knock down all four at once.

GO! GO!

SAMPLE MISSION 1

Having started off simply giving you a few buildings and something to bash them down with, *Blast Corps'* missions gradually begin to probe your cranium.





1

The problem: There's a huge railway station right in the path of the carrier, down at the other end of the level.
The solution: Hop aboard this handily placed train and race down to the building, to take it out.





2

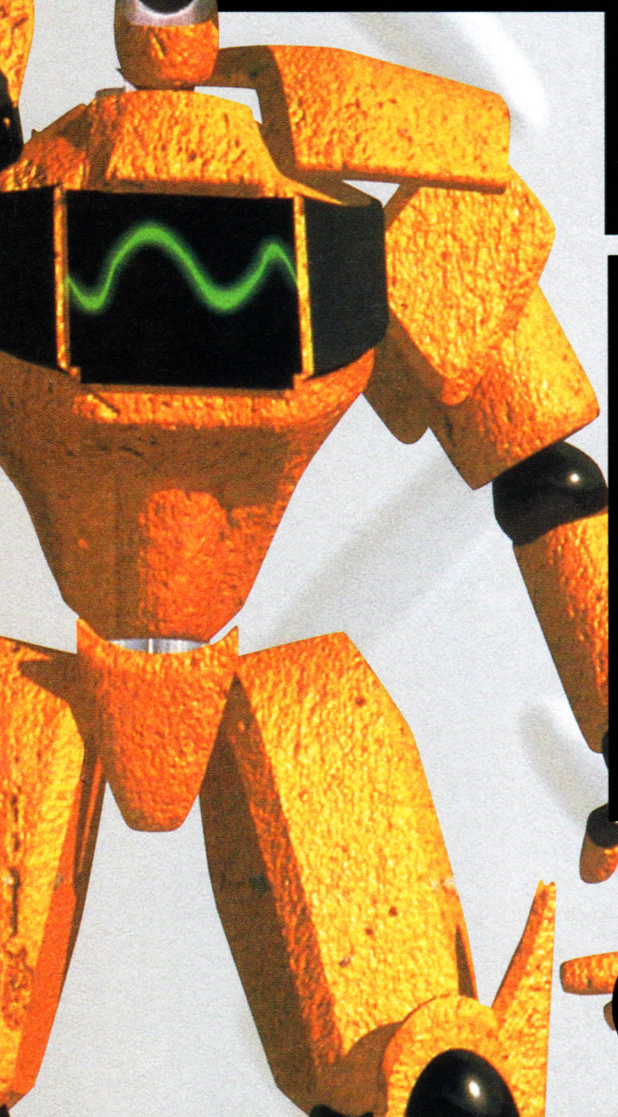
The problem: There's a crate of TNT on the back of the train that would be ideal for taking out the station. Unfortunately, however, your little bloke is too weedy to push it.
The solution: Leg it back down the track and nip across the footbridge and you'll find a bulldozer. Just what's needed.



3

The problem: But – gagh – the bulldozer won't go across the train tracks to where it's needed, as they're raised up a bit.
The solution: Load the bulldozer onto this handy crane (pausing only to sweep away a Portakabin that's also in the way of the carrier) and lift it over the track. Then run back over the bridge, climb aboard and speed back to the train.





CYCLONE SUIT

A mad robot that does elaborate tumbles and flick-flacks into buildings.
Pros: Immensely destructive and delightful to watch.
Cons: Requires a long run-up, which the screen doesn't zoom out far enough for you to judge properly. Would've been better if they'd called it 'Acrobot'.
Special controls: The buttons all do a tumble. So that's easy, then.

Speed: 8
Destructive power: 8
Ease of control: 6
Overall: 7

Tip: Don't ask us. This one's got a mind of its own.



4

The problem: Well, there isn't one any more. Just push the crate off the train and towards the obstructive station…
The solution: …and bingo.

MISSION COMPLETE!

SAMPLE MISSION 2

As you get further into *Blast Corps*, the missions get more and more involved. As soon as you solve one problem another crops up.





1 **The problem:** No sooner has the mission begun than the missile carrier's heading towards a group of buildings:
The solution: J-Bomb, who you're luckily already sitting in. He'll clear a path with no trouble at all.







2 **The problem:** A bit further on, and there's a railway platform with nothing in the middle. If the carrier hits the gap it'll be curtains for humankind. A bad thing.
The solution: Fly down the track and over the hill and you'll find a train. Climb aboard and drive, full steam ahead, back to the gap. Park the train there and its flatbed truck will bridge the gap neatly. Don't forget to drive the car off the back, though – as well as getting it out of the way, you'll be able to catch a lift back to J-Bomb.





3 **The problem:** While you've been doing that, the carrier's blundered into another conurbation.
The solution: With seconds to spare, squash all the skyscrapers with J-Bomb.



4 **The problem:** Another gap, this time a river.
The solution: Zoom down the river and locate a boat. Chug back upstream and moor it in the gap. Then move the car off and dump it.







5 **The problem:** More buildings.
The solution: J-Bomb again.
And that's it!

MISSION COMPLETE!







SOFT SELL
Japanese games adverts are normally great – much better than the half-naked women and 'clever wording' we're subjected to here – but the ones Nintendo have run for *Blast Corps* are a bit, well…

This one looks rather dull, and we found it strangely buried at the back of a magazine. (Nintendo normally plump for the back cover, and a bright 'n' cheerful look.)



And this one, featuring a 20-year-old girl called Miwa Hosoki with a mole on her chin, well… The Japanese box does at least have "Blast 'em all!" emblazoned across it.



By the way, if you decide to plump for the Japanese version of *Blast Corps*, *Blastdozer*, you shouldn't encounter too many problems. All the helpful hints and messages are in Japanese, of course, but most of it's stuff you can work out for yourself anyway. Some of the scientists might be a bit tricky, though.

GO! GO!

EXTRA BITS
As well as buildings and vehicles, *Blast Corps* has quite a few other bits and bobs that you'll need to get to grips with.

CRATES
There are three sorts of boxes scattered about. TNT crates can be pushed into buildings whereupon they'll explode and demolish the whole thing. Touching them, though, triggers a timer which will blow the crate if you're not quick enough. They come with various lengths of fuse – watch for the speed the crate flashes at to determine how long you've got. Then there are missile crates, which provide ammo for the Ballista, and also crates containing charges for Sideswipe.

RDUS
Everywhere you look there'll be little dots, which light up when you go near them. These are RDUs – Radiation Dispersal Units – and are thankfully glossed over by the manual. You get a bonus for every one you collect, and you'll need to get 100% of them to earn a gold medal. RDUs often hint at the route you need to take and lead off to secret areas, a bit like those little triangle things in *Turok*.

COMMUNICATION POINTS
These are tucked away in often tricky-to-reach places, and give access to bonus levels when activated.

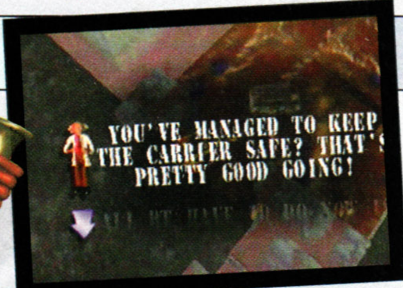


SURVIVORS
Occasionally people will come scuttling out of buildings you've squashed. They'll run around for a bit until the helicopter swoops down to collect them. Disappointingly, they can't be run over.



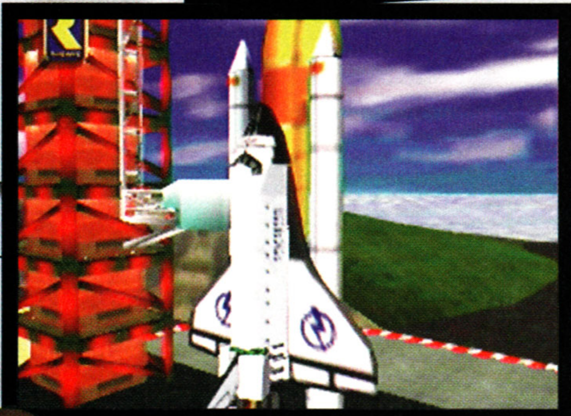
AND WHEN I'VE DONE ALL THAT?

It's become something of a Nintendo tradition that there's always more to their games than there at first appears. Which, in the case of *Blast Corps*, is just as well, as it doesn't take long to demolish its 20 main missions. So what happens next?



The Scientists

For some reason, to ensure that the missile carrier can be detonated safely, six scientists are required. For similarly tenuous reasons, these six are hidden throughout the levels that you've already conquered. So you'll need to go back and ferret them all out. This is excellent fun as you'll find all sorts of secret passages and underground railway systems that you'll previously have overlooked in your haste to bash down buildings. A couple of the scientists are quite fiendishly buried, but altogether they won't take you more than an hour or so to find.



The Space Shuttle

Great celebrations, then, as disaster is averted and the missiles are blown up safely. But – oh no! – now the Space Shuttle's in trouble. It's having to make an emergency landing… guess where? Yep, right in the middle of a city.



Once you've completed all the missions, there's much low-gravity fun to be enjoyed on the moon. Shame they give you the sassen-rassen dumper truck to drive around in, though.

The Moon

With the Shuttle safe the Blast Corps team are just about to put their feet up when – aarrghh – it's discovered that there are lots of buildings on the Moon that need bashing down. For some reason. Much low-gravity fun ensues, and with a completely new set of graphics, too. (Except, guess which of *Blast Corps'* fine vehicles you're given… Bah.)



As you accrue gold medals you'll gradually be promoted. Look forward to being a Decorated Damager, a Gifted Ruiner, an Accomplished Conqueror and a Master Despoiler. Oh yes.

The Gold Medals

Each mission you complete earns you one gold medal. However, you can earn another by returning to the scene and knocking down every remaining building and collecting every RDU (little things that light up when you go near them).



Some of the bonus levels are just plain weird. Here's a Pac Man one, and there's also pool.

Races aren't exactly Mario Kart, but do test your car-driving skills.



The Bonus Games

As well as the main mission, *Blast Corps* has loads of extra challenges – little races, buildings to demolish within a given time, that sort of thing. There's even a version of pool with a bulldozer and some TNT crates. And a sort of *Pac Man*. At the end you're given a medal depending on how well you did.

The Outer Planets?

Get a gold medal on every level and, some say, you'll be sent on extra Moon-style missions to Mercury, Venus, Mars and who-knows-where-else. It's possible – the planets can be seen in the background. Exciting, eh? We'll keep trying for those medals, and report in a future **N64**.

With *Blast Corps,* Nintendo and Rare are claiming they've created 'an entirely new genre of game'. Psh, yeah. But, if you think about it, they're right. Every Nintendo 64 game so far slots neatly into a generously-guanoed pigeon hole. *Mario Kart 64's* a racing game; *Pilotwings 64's* a flight sim; *Turok's* a *Doom* game; and so on. But *Blast Corps's* a… well, a what? A smash-'em-up? It's not just about demolition: there's all sorts of thoughtful vehicle-juggling to be done. A save-the-world game? No. A driving game? No no.

And it's this inability to be labelled that makes *Blast Corps* so immediately appealing. You start playing it, and right away you're doing things that you've never done in a game before. You're skidding around in a dumper truck, tail-sliding into buildings. You're driving a train. You're causing a giant robot to somersault into office blocks. You're lifting a bulldozer across some railway tracks with a crane. You're desperately trying to bash down a line of houses towards which a radioactive lorry is steadily inching, a bead of perspiration forming on your temple.



Next time your neighbours refuse to 'keep it down', go away for a while and then return in Sideswipe. That'll give them something to think about. Parking's no problem, either.



The levels get better and better the further in you play. They begin as simple bashing-down-buildings-against-the-clock affairs, but then gradually evolve into more thoughtful, puzzle-style scenarios. How do you release J-Bomb from that impregnable tomb? How are you supposed to destroy that enormous building when there's no TNT anywhere? How on earth are you going to get to the top of that massive cliff?

RUDE

I got frustrated from time to time. In fact, a couple of times I said some rude words. Even Tim looked shocked. Not all the levels are brilliantly designed, too many relying on the contrived tactic of giving you a huge number of buildings to destroy and then a really rubbish vehicle (the annoyingly useless Backlash, usually) to do it with. I found myself having to start again from scratch rather too many times in some of the more convoluted puzzly levels, having to repeat the early, simple steps long after I'd got bored of them. (An echo of *Lemmings* – which I despise – here.) Then there are niggly faults, like the way vehicles sometimes get stuck in the scenery (particularly railway tracks), or the way your little bloke often blunders straight back into vehicles he's just hopped out of, or the restricted selection of views which never quite seem to zoom out far enough to let you see what you're doing.

But *Blast Corps* is overridingly great. It's just so refreshing to have all these new toys to play with, and find oneself in so many new situations. Several elements work together to make the game compelling: the difficulty of controlling the demolition vehicles; the not knowing quite what you're meant to do next; the carrier advancing relentlessly while you're running around in panic; and the rewards you're constantly earning in the form of medals and bonus levels. It's great.

The graphics? Oddly, I didn't spend a lot of time thinking about them – there was simply too much to be done. They're actually extremely good, as it happens, with tonnes of detail, no slow-down or fogging (even in action replay mode, where acres of finely detailed landscape can be seen stretching off into the distance), and some smashing transparent smoke and explosion effects. But I didn't really notice much of it until I came back to take some pictures for the review because the game itself demands so much attention. And that's great. With the Nintendo 64 we've reached the point where amazingly realistic graphics can simply be taken for granted and a game can, just like in the 'good' old days, be judged purely by what you actually do in it.

MOONING

Given that *Blast Corps* is so great, it seems almost ungrateful to knock it for all being over too quickly. But… well, within a couple of afternoons I'd completed all the missions, rescued all the scientists and returned safely from the moon. And that's me – normally a bit crap at anything but *Mario Kart*. All that left to do was to go back and try to get a complete set of gold medals – something that I'm now doing, but rather half-heartedly. Despite Nintendo's best efforts to flesh it out, *Blast Corps* is something of a one-week wonder, with no multi-player facility and not the same incentive to rack up world-beating times as *Mario Kart*.

That's perhaps one reason why Nintendo have taken the unusual step of selling *Blast Corps* for ¥6,800 (about £35) in Japan, compared with the usual ¥8,800-9,800 (£45-50). At that price it's an absolute must-have. At the $60 (£37) Nintendo of America are asking, it doesn't take much thinking about either. If you're considering buying *Blast Corps* from an importer, though, with all the overheads that entails, you're going to have to give it a bit more thought. And it remains to be seen what price tag THE will write when they release it in the UK later this summer.

Lifespan aside, *Blast Corps* ranks as easily one of the best N64 games so far. It encapsulates everything the N64 is supposed to be about: unprecedented graphics and sound, millions of secret bits and things to find, ceaseless inventiveness, and, most importantly, a style of playing that's simply never been seen before. Truly, Rare are great, and Nintendo's faith in them has again been rewarded.

JONATHAN

HUMAN DEMOLITION!
Of very little practical benefit, but worth noting, is that if you drive up to a building, park next to it, and then try to get out by pressing Z, your little bloke just goes 'Doh!' because the building's in the way. If you hold down Z the offending construction will eventually blow up.

GHOST CARS!
Complete a race on one of the racing bonus levels, and then make another attempt using a different vehicle, and you'll see a *Mario-Kart*-style 'ghost' of yourself on your previous go.

8 VISUALS
Not much variety from level to level, but loads of detail and some fantastic explosions.

9 SOUNDS
An intriguing variety of splendid tunes, from '70s cop show to hoe-down. Voices too, and all the bangs and rumbles you'd expect.

9 MASTERY
So much N64 sophistication the mechanics become transparent, allowing the game to shine through. Tonnes of secret bits.

6 LIFESPAN
The weak-point, to be honest, with the end arriving in hours. Although, it's so much fun it bears lots of repeated playing.

VERDICT
Inspiringly original, and fun from start to finish. Another reason to love your N64.

88%

TO BE CONTINUED… UK *Blast Corps* is due late this summer. Masses more on it then…



◁ Disturbing Marsupial goings-on in parts of Doraemon open up the way for copious amounts of "Well, it's different..." and "Ha! Kooky!" comments. GO AWAY.



△ Assuming the whiskered-one's various guises is pleasant enough.



Burger collecting helps restore lost energy. Those crazy cats. ▷

RACE TO THE BRINE

Once you've gained access to the underwater caverns and tunnels of ***Doraemon's*** world, there're some ***Cruis'n USA***-style antics to be had...

Nitro boosts are scattered about to help speed you up a tad. ▷



The starting line and the lad – erm, missile thing – gets an excellent start. Nice! ▷



Past the missile and then onto some particularly tricky corners. ▷



The bridge signals one more corner to go. Be careful not to fall off now... ▷



... but even then the little blighter scuds past the line to win. Grrr. ▷



REMEMBER

Once you've garnered one victory over the missile, you can race him again and try to beat him to earn a power-up. However, he gets faster and trickier to beat the more you try. Typical.

Win three times, mind, and he'll have no choice but to present you with a green crystal, the *Doraemon* equivalent of *Mario's* golden stars. He sulks afterwards but that's not your problem.

DORAEMON

So much a clone, you can hear the lawsuits rustling...

Doraemon		
EPOCH		
Out now	64M	1
Unlikely	Controller Pak back-up	On-cartridge back-up
Y9800 (Approx £50)		

ACCESSIBILITY (Japan → UK)

If this were in English, you'd breeze through. Being in Japanese makes things a little trickier.

VISUALS 7

Lovingly crafted landscapes but thoroughly devoid of *Mario's* bustling.

SOUNDS 6

At first fun, then thoroughly-frightening fairground music. Some nice effects.

MASTERY 5

Shows a degree of skill, although most ideas are already in *Mario*.

LIFESPAN 5

A fairly simple adventure although the Japanese hardens things up a bit.

VERDICT

Although occasionally very good, *Doraemon* too often borders on the bland.

60%

The *Mario* games always proved a sound source of inspiration for Epoch in their SNES days. And, now that the plumber lad has heaved himself into the 64-bit world, lifetime habits certainly aren't about to change. But *Doraemon* games on the SNES were never more than adequate alternatives to Mazza's adventures, and even with a welcome spadeful of 3D compost, the latest installment in the life of everyone's favourite blue atomic cat doesn't come close to displacing the red-clothed moustachio'd one.

The fact that this is entirely in Japanese makes for a pretty tricky, puzzle-laden platformer, though. Clues aren't easy to understand (unless you're au-fait with Far-Eastern noughts and crosses) so much of the game consists of searching and exploring. This takes some thought but mainly just time due to the sheer size of the levels.

Doraemon is fairly generous with its worlds, certainly. But enemies are far too thin and far between and often the game becomes merely a tour of the various underwater canyons and flower-flooded green belts. And that's why everything appears to be so sedate and elongated. *Mario 64* constantly has you wandering, exploring and participating, but all too often, *Doraemon* pitches you into the videogame equivalent of the Shetland Isles, eventually throwing in a couple of small rabbits or swooping, pink birds, and ultimately a treasure chest that rewards you for your country-long pursuits.

It's nicely done in places, with a number of genuinely original touches – the racing car and the four other playable characters, each with individual weapons and abilities, are good examples. Somehow, however, the game just generally fails to ignite or inspire. Each completed level is just another in the bag, as opposed to another step on an ever more wondrous ladder.

This venture won't really enhance Epoch's painfully run-of-the-mill CV. Just as the original Doraemon comic book was aimed at the younger end of the Japanese market, so is this, and anyone seeking out the next great platformer will be seriously disappointed with it. A pleasant enough time-waster, then, but never up to the standard of the game it so desperately wants to be.

TIM



△ Even the end-of-level, Boss-defeated smile and "amusing" sampled speech is Mario-esque. Tsch.



The first boss won't prove too much of a problem. Firstly, he's fat and, secondly, he can't move his arms. ▷



Taking on the guise of 'H. Dill' and his reliably fast 'Rilliams Wenault' means you'll lap-up Silverstone.



Because the game isn't official, the sponsors change in name. However, the logos are similar to the originals.



The best way of garnering respect is by waiting for corners. The CPU drivers are always slightly suspect here.

HUMAN GRAND PRIX

Human Grand Prix		
HUMAN		
Japan: Out now	64M	1
UK: TBA	Controller Pak back-up	~~cartridge back-up~~
Y9800 (Approx £50)		

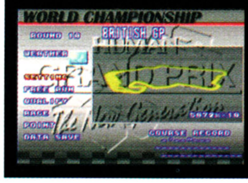
Before rally games take control, Human bring Formula 1 racing to the N64.

SHAKE UP WITH MAKE UP!

When *Human Grand Prix* hits US shores in September – under the life-changing title of F1 Pole Position – its distributors Ubi Soft are promising extensive changes. It would seem the French-based software giants who produced, erm, *Street Racer* are taking to Human with a particularly weighty stick and ringing the changes like nobody's business. A spokesman at Ubi Soft's American office commented recently that, "we're making extensive changes to the game. The letterboxing will be gone and we're going to do a lot of cleaning up. It'll look and play substantially better than it does now". Strong words, hmm?



Were it not for the horrendous pop-up, the courses would look gloriously detailed.



The options screen appears before every race enabling you to make subtle changes, should you see fit.

History may well record that *Human Grand Prix* was an enjoyable, if flawed, SNES game, but this N64 renovation owes more to the PlayStation's recent sweat-making *F1* than any 16-bit predecessor. And though there's no doubt *HGP* is the weaker of the two titles, persevere with it and you'll most likely find yourself hugely entertained.

Options are plentiful, with Time Attack and Battle modes giving you total control over races and a Contract preference allowing your devious tactical mind to poach drivers from other teams. The Grand Prix, though, is likely to be your ultimate port of call. Faultless it isn't. Grass verges and sandy sidings don't just lose you speed, they tend to stop you completely – buttock-clenchingly – dead. And the sun-drenched streets of Monaco – and the 15 other GP-based holiday spots – take on an 'under construction' feel as their architecture appears suddenly via some truly horrendous pop-up.

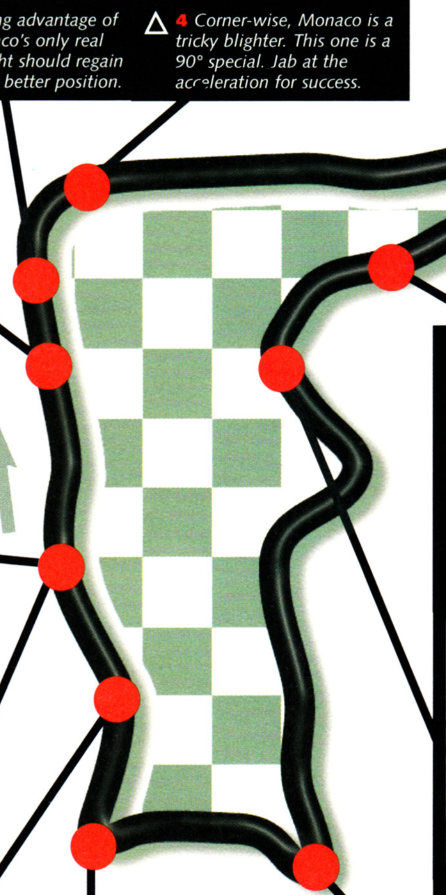
But the speed of the game is breathtaking. Careering round the track at 250 kmh is beautifully realised, while the analogue stick was *made* to control racing cars. The AI in the game is also well defined, with CPU opponents possessing the kind of competitive but fair attitude that the drivers in *Mario Kart* so noticeably lack. And, finally, the detail is enormous, with every whim catered for. A refined set of work shop options, for one, turns proceedings into a *Perfect Striker* for engine fans.

Perhaps not thoroughly deserving of an import pay-out, then, but *HGP* is back-slappingly fun all the same.

TIM

Tour of the Town

Monaco is one of the most challenging locations in the Formula 1 calendar, and Human's pin-point interpretation makes for sweat-riddled gaming. Tiny, barely passable streets, gawp-worthy hairpin corners and only one true straight add up to tough racing. And when you've failed qualifying and find yourself last on the grid, it's the sort of impossible mission Jim Phelps positively hankers for…





△ **Start** *Prior to the big race, investigate the delights under your bonnet.*



△ **1** *Back of the grid, certainly, but time that acceleration right and you're off.*



△ **2** *Sadly, your timing is rubbish and, as a result, you're still languishing at the back.*



△ **3** *Taking advantage of Monaco's only real straight should regain you a better position.*



△ **4** *Corner-wise, Monaco is a tricky blighter. This one is a 90° special. Jab at the acceleration for success.*



△ **5** *"Nightmare" amply describes this hairpin about half way round…*



△ **6** *… whilst some concentration is needed to keep up with the pack…*



△ **7** *… on this bent piece of speed-friendly track. Use it to your advantage…*



△ **8** *… then cut across the raised section here to move further through the pack.*



△ **9** *A short straight gives you a little time to exert your authority.*



10 *But, for that, the last quarter of track at Monaco is the worst. The streets are so narrow that the speed is consistently kept down to a minimum. A brain is needed…*



△ **11** *… especially if the course is wet, in which case veer right for the pits.*



△ **12** *Moving up to the line after one lap and you're doing well. Still work to do, though.*

SIGN ON THE DOTTED LINE…

The Contract Mode provides players with an opportunity to delve into the multi-million dollar transfer market. It's not quite Eric Hall stuff but, here for example, Our Lad Damon™ – or H. Dill as he's labelled in this court-friendly unlicenced F1 game – can replace either the sausage-munching Schumacher or the Blighty-based smile-machine Eddie Irvine. New, adjusted data can be saved onto a Controller Pak so that your brand new teaming of Dames and Mickey can stay with you forever. A simple option but one that gives immense amounts of strategic freedom.



ACCESSIBILITY

Fairly good – a lot of the menus are in English.

6 VISUALS

Atrocious pop-up. But sleek, detailed cars and tracks.

4 SOUNDS

The PSX's *F1* grasps the roar of a car engine. This sounds like a beehive.

6 MASTERY

Could have been crisper, but speed-wise this takes full advantage.

8 LIFESPAN

HGP has its faults, but the more you play the better it becomes.

VERDICT

F1 without the slick, licence-led 'feel'. Able to provide sheer bouts of enjoyment nonetheless.

71%

HOW TO... find all the keys in TUROK

LEVEL 1 The Hub Ruins

6 keys, 1 chronoscepter piece

Here we are at the beginning of the game, and naturally everything's designed to ease you in gently. There's only one path through this first level, and all the keys are either directly in your way or just off to one side. But keep alert – if you miss something, you'll have to go all the way through again. And don't forget the Chronoscepter piece, either; you need one from each level to assemble the final weapon.

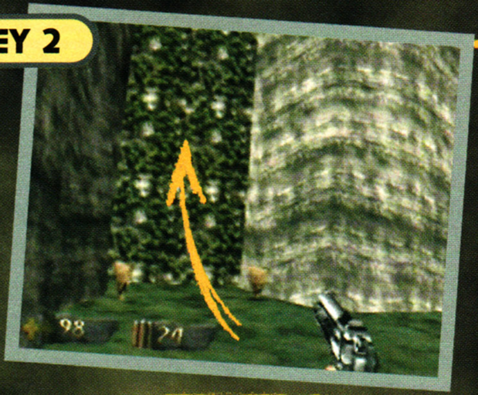
Level 1 KEY 1



Most of the Level 1 keys are fairly obviously placed, and no more so than the first. You can't miss it.

Level 1 KEY 2

The second, though, is easily overlooked if you haven't got your eyes peeled. You'll find these vines behind the first guy who ambushes you from the left – climb to the top for the key.



Level 1 KEY 3

It may not look like it, but you can make that jump. Take a deep breath, run and press the right shoulder button at the last moment.



Level 1 KEY 4



The fourth Level 1 key is tucked in an alcove on the right at a crossroads in the cave system. Again, you can't miss it.

OK

Turok's **a tricky enough game as it is – the last thing you need is to not be able to find the keys. Let *N64* show you where they are.**

Level 1 KEY 5



Be patient working through the column maze – it's not really that big, and you do find the fifth Level 1 key at the end.

Level 1 KEY 6



You'd need very poor eyesight to miss this final key. Get it, enter the transporter, thing and...

Level 1 CHRONOSCEPTER PIECE



Here's the first chronoscepter piece – you'll find it in the column maze, just before the fifth key and the exit.

...work your way past the end-of-level guardian to the Hub. Walk up to the panels in front of each blue gateway to insert your keys and activate the Level 2 and 3 portals.



GO! GO!

LEVEL 2 The Jungle

3 keys, 1 chronoscepter piece

After the molly-coddlingly easy opening level, things rapidly start to get much, much harder with the onset of Level 2. The Chronoscepter piece is especially difficult to find in this level, but the second key can prove just as elusive. In both cases, you have to peer over the edge of a cliff to see a hidden ledge far below.

Level 2 KEY 1

Jump into the water past the first village...



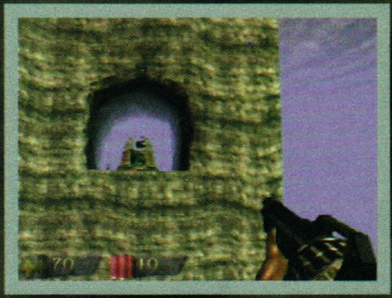


...and you'll find this secret passage under the tree in the middle of the lake.



Swim through the underground cavern and you'll find the first key.

Level 2 KEY 2



You'll spot the next key high on the right as you take the cliff path.

Continue on the path, then jump down where you see these treetops poking up from the platform below.





When you reach this precipice, run and jump down to this entrance.

Level 2 KEY 3



Right at the end of the level, you see the last key high above the water...

...so turn and swim towards the deep water to the northeast.





There's a sub-aqua passage marked on the map; dive down and follow it for the final key.

Level 2 CHRONOSCEPTER PIECE

Turn left past these huge statues and follow the path past the buildings until, if you look over the edge...





...you can just make out this island-like platform below. Jump down...



...then jump down again to another, lower, platform. And there it is.

LEVEL 3 The Ancient City

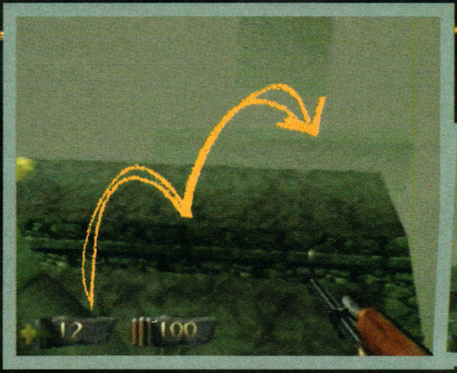
3 keys, 1 chronoscepter piece

The location of the Level 3 Chronoscepter piece is, without doubt, the most frustratingly flummoxing secret in the entire game. You'll need super-human patience and skill to navigate the grotesquely unfair sequence of jumps at the end of the level – if you're having trouble, try switching on the map and using that to plan your trajectories.

Level 3 KEY 1

It's easy to miss the fact that there's a way into this building with the trees in front of it. Go through, use the transporter inside...





...jump fearlessly across the roof of this building and onto the opposite ledge...

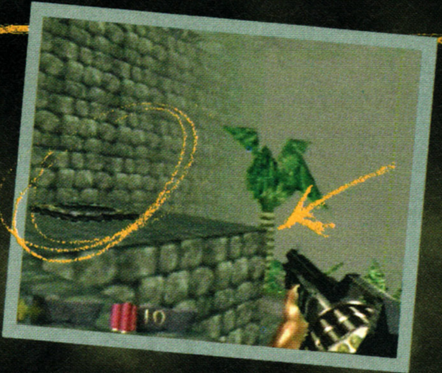


...then defeat the waiting bad guys for your well-earned reward.

Level 3 KEY 2



Walk around the tree-fronted building to the right. Now go through the gate (in the wall at the back) to enter the next city section.



Fight your way through to this switch, then step on it to open up a big staircase by the tree on the right.



Go down that staircase, follow the path, enter the teleporter and walk forward for the second key.

Level 3 KEY 3

Make sure you save your game before trying to jump from pillar to pillar here: it's stupidly hard and, quite frankly, rather tedious.





Once you manage to reach the portal, jump through. Don't worry about having missed a key – it's on the other side.

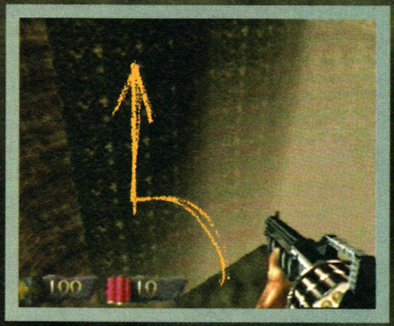


First, though, you'll have to defeat the boss character. Shoot up his jeep...



...then take out the man himself. The final key is now in your grasp.

Level 3 CHRONOSCEPTER PIECE



You remember that array of pillars you had to jump across to get to the portal? Well, first you'll have to make your way to the far-left column, jumping down the series of decreasingly tall pillars to the left of the gateway.



Then you have to launch yourself at the vines (cunningly concealed in the left-hand corner), and climb to the top. Not easy.

GO! GO!

LEVEL 4 The Ruins

3 keys, 1 chronoscepter piece

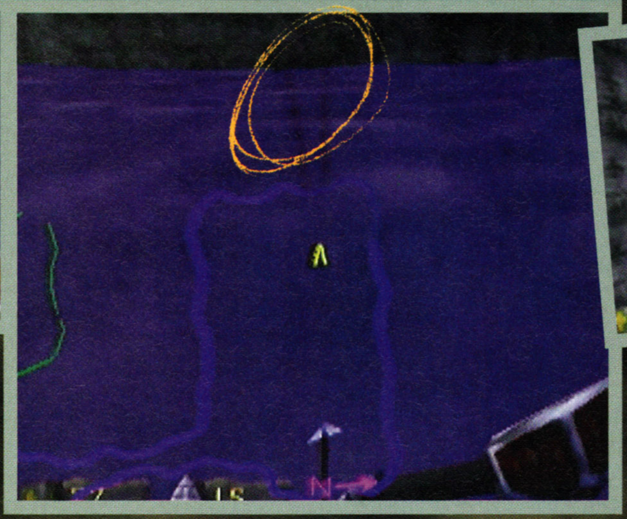
Not a bad level, this, with quite a few nice surprises and twists. The statues-coming-to-life moment is a shocker, repeated to even better effect at the top of the waterfalls.

Getting to the exit after finding the last key is harder than usual, due mostly to another rather silly array of pillars to jump over. But you should be used to 'em by now.

Level 4 KEY 1



Right at the start, jump down to the left and into the water.

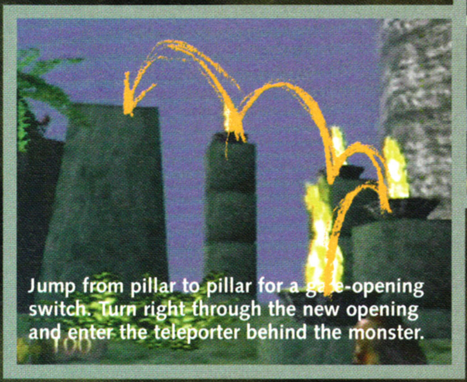


Swim West, through the sub-aqua passage marked on the map.



Enter the teleporter, follow the path through another teleporter, and there's the key.

Level 4 KEY 2



Jump from pillar to pillar for a gate-opening switch. Turn right through the new opening and enter the teleporter behind the monster.



Work your way to the top-right corner of the fence maze, then head forward through the ruins for the key.

Level 4 KEY 3

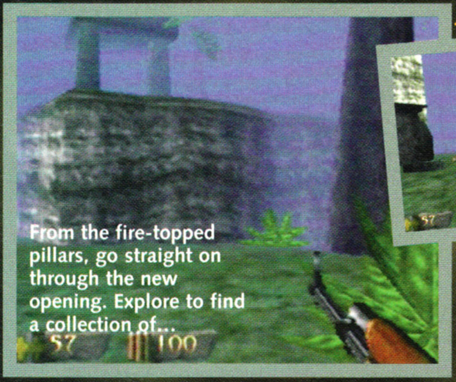


Take out the monsters which come to life when you step onto the matrix, then enter the teleporter ahead.



Defeat the three priests for the final Level 4 key.

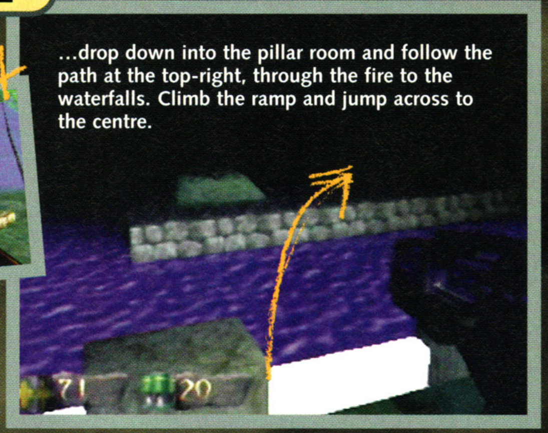
Level 4 CHRONOSCEPTER PIECE



From the fire-topped pillars, go straight on through the new opening. Explore to find a collection of...



...nine teleporters. Take the third on the left...



...drop down into the pillar room and follow the path at the top-right, through the fire to the waterfalls. Climb the ramp and jump across to the centre.



Go back through the teleporter, hit the four switches to raise the pillars and jump to the top. Float up in the water, jump out onto this ledge, then jump to the top-right of the pillar maze and follow the path to the exit.

LEVEL 5 The Catacombs

3 keys, 1 chronoscepter piece

A dark, dingy and depressing level, this, with lots of claustrophobic crawling through tiny holes, and plenty of long narrow corridors full of unpleasant meanies. You'll need patience to get the second key, working carefully through lots of switches and maze-like passageways, but the excellent boss at the very end makes it all worthwhile.

Level 5 KEY 1



Jump on the switch to open the panel behind, and go through.

Cross the two bridges, avoiding the swinging claws.



Defeat the priest, and the key is yours.



Level 5 KEY 2



You can climb this wall – do so, then turn around and jump into the teleporter.



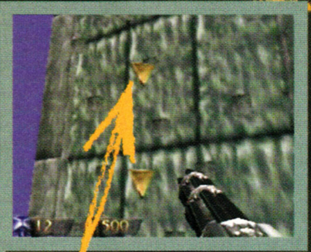
There are three switches in this room which make the central pillars rise. Step on the middle one, then head left.



Two doors open after you've hit the two left switches. Go straight forward…

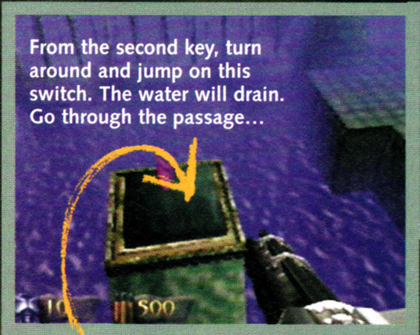
…and fight your way through the corridors. When you've made the column rise, do the same on the right…



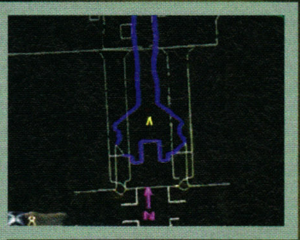


…then jump on the columns and exit the building. Outside, swim to the tower in the middle of the lake and climb up the side.

Level 5 KEY 3



From the second key, turn around and jump on this switch. The water will drain. Go through the passage…



…crawl through the hole and swim to bottom of the water. There's a passage out marked on the map.

Once through the passage, save your game, enter the portal and defeat the rather impressive boss.



Level 5 CHRONOSCEPTER PIECE



Turn left in the room where you opened the panels; go forward and take the first right.

Swim through the brown water and crawl through this hidden hole.



Work your way through the corridors, defeat the priest at the end and pick up the piece.



GO! GO!

LEVEL 6 Treetop Village

3 keys, 1 chronoscepter piece

A very large and potentially confusing level, there's an awful lot of leaping to go through before you even get to the village itself. And almost all the jumps require you to throw yourself from a great height at a small platform below, so keep peering over the cliffs, and keep your head down to watch where your feet are falling.

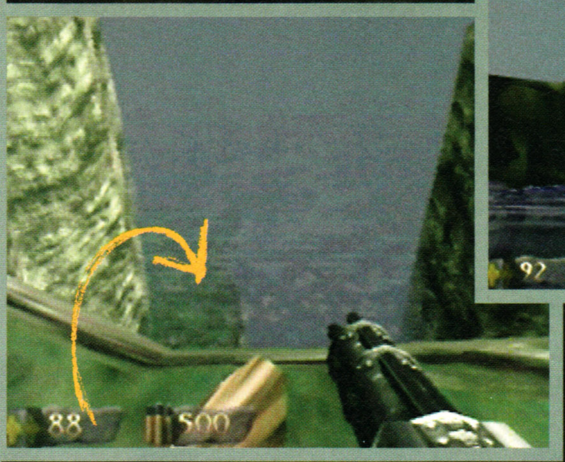
Level 6 KEY 1



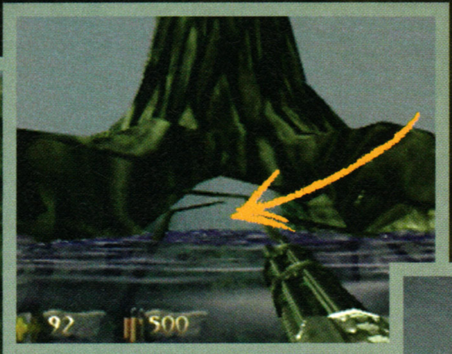
Fall off the cliff here, after the first checkpoint…



…then jump across the platforms to this hole, and fall down it.



There's only one path through this bit of the level, but it's quite difficult – you'll have to look over a lot of edges, like this, to see platforms far below.



Make your way through to the water, use the save point on land, turn around and swim into this hollow tree.

Follow the path through the village to this checkpoint, and turn right.





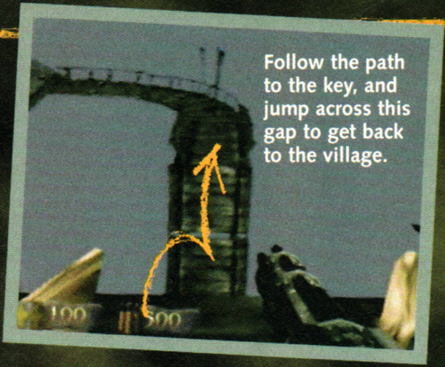
There's plenty more jumping before you reach the key.



Level 6 KEY 2



Go back to the checkpoint and take the left-hand path. Follow it to the bridge outside the cave with the save point. Turn around, jump to the small ledge, then jump to the cave on the right.



Follow the path to the key, and jump across this gap to get back to the village.

Level 6 KEY 3

Back at the rope bridge, cross to the teleporter, follow the path, kill the priest and go through the new opening for the final Level 6 key. You can't miss it.



Level 6 CHRONOSCEPTER PIECE



Easy, this: just jump left behind the portal at the end of the level.

LEVEL 7 The Lost Land

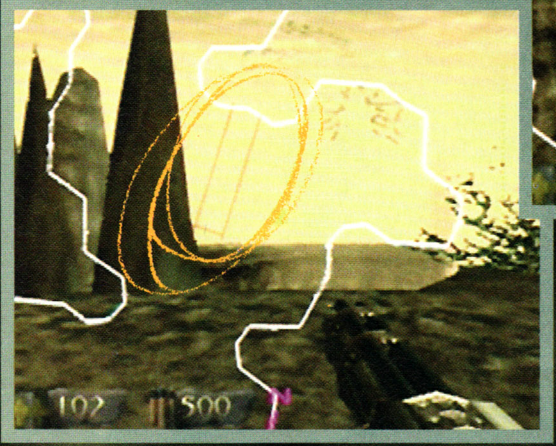
2 keys, 1 chronoscepter piece

A curious mixed-bag of a level, with some of the most frustrating series of precision jumps ever seen in a video game ruining the first half. It's followed by a spectacular assault on a hugely-defended fortress, packed with action and explosions. Again, use your map to help you with the moving-pillar jumps over the lava shown below.

Level 7 KEY 1



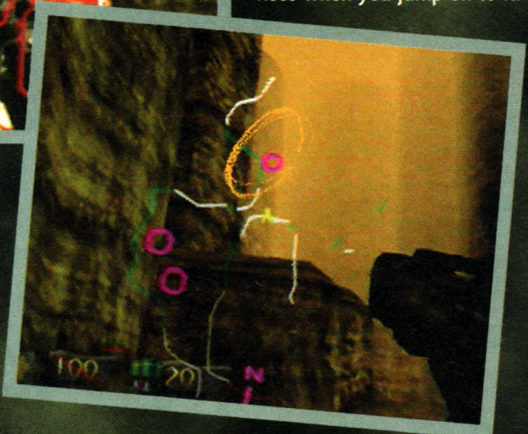
After the second checkpoint, follow the cliff edge, and jump down here to activate a switch. Climb the vines to get out.



Follow the newly-opened path to the first save point, then use your map to find the cave entrance down in this hole.



Follow the path through the checkpoints to these moving pillars, then jump on them.



At the top, after some stupidly hard pillar-jumping, you'll notice this column bridging the gap here after the priests. It's low, but rises when you jump on to it.

Level 7 KEY 2



Go through the teleporters into the fortress. Hit this switch...



...then run back a bit and you'll find this block has dropped to reveal a new passageway. You'll find the key at the end of it.

Level 7 CHRONOSCEPTER PIECE



Facing the moving pillars shown above, jump into the lava and follow the wall on the left to the next alcove. Jump into the pool behind – it looks like lava but it's actually safe. Swim down and to the right, then use your map to locate the secret passageway to the key.

LEVEL 8 The Final Confrontation

0 keys, 1 chronoscepter piece

You've got all the keys now, so there are no more to be found – Level 8 is just a frighteningly tough slog through hordes of enemies, with further challenge provided by a nasty pillar maze for which, again, you should use your map to align your jumps. The final chronoscepter piece is right at the end – and you'll need it!

Priority: Top Secret
Agent: Dash Rendar
Originator: Rebel High Command, Hoth
Transmission: Mission Briefing

FOR YOUR EYES ONLY

Overview
The success of your mission is paramount to the survival of the Rebel Alliance. In these deeply troubled times we must not falter in our fight for freedom even if the odds against us appear insurmountable.

May the force be with you.



HOW TO... secure all the Challenge Points in SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE

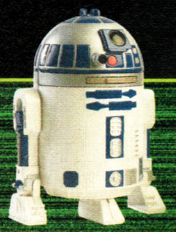
Part 1 of 2



Priority: Top Secret
Transmission title: Results of collecting Challenge Points

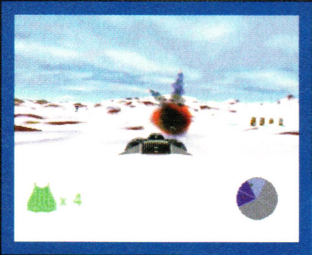
Level Setting Easy: Leebo scanner (a mapping device).
Level Setting Medium: Fly as an X-Wing in the Skyhook Battle.
Level Setting Hard: Invincibility and unlimited ammo in the *Doom* levels.
Level Setting Jedi: The Wampas in the *Doom* levels will folow you and help kill your enemies.

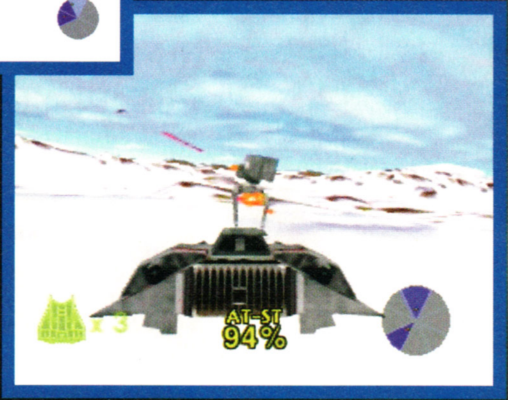
Additional: Prizes on Easy and Medium are accessed by holding the camera button for five seconds. The Hard prize is accessed by holding Crouch for 15 seconds. Prizes are not transferable between difficulty levels.



Priority: Top Secret
Transmission title: Snow Speeder Flight Tactics Manual
Challenge Points: Three

STAGE 1
The usual Imperial tactic for ground attack is to deploy a group of four Probe Droids in advance of the major land forces. An air-braked Snow Speeder sweep parallel to our emplacements can take these out quickly in a 'one, two, turn, three and four' formation.



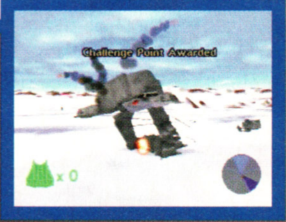


STAGE 2
The Imperial's initial strike force consists of two AT-ST walkers supported by four Probe Droids. Rebel intelligence has discovered a weakness in this formation. AT-STs have only a 180° line of fire. Thus, by flying to the edge of the engagement area and flying air-braked up behind the Walkers, Snow Speeders can be immune from their fire. As you approach the Walker, pull out of your run and turn back before flying past (and thus into the line of fire of the Walker's cannon fire). Three slow approaches on each Walker should be enough to take it out. Pick off the Probe Droids as previously described.

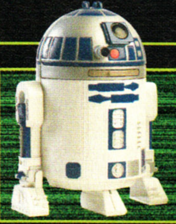
STAGE 3
The second wave of Imperial attack will consist of four Probe Droids and two AT-STs flanking an AT-AT Walker. Approach this formation with caution. Survey the enemy layout and skirt the battlefield until your Snow Speeder is behind the Imperial direction of attack. Take out the AT-STs as described previously. Now engage the AT-AT from behind. Fly in quickly, and, once close, engage the air brake and keep it held. When your computer gives you the go-ahead, launch your harpoon and be ready to pilot your craft from the remote position. To trip an AT-AT, you'll have to circle it about four times. To circle clockwise, the joystick should be held diagonal down right, returning to the central neutral position to fly straight along the longer sides of the Walker. Tripping the AT-AT will gain pilots a Challenge Point. Beware: harpoons are limited on every level other than Easy.

Mop up the battlefield by picking off the remaining Probe Droids as previously described.





STAGE 4
The final wave of Imperial attack will consist of three AT-STs and four Probe Droids supporting two AT-AT Walkers. Approach this battle as before, locating the rear of the battleground and concentrating initially on the AT-STs. A Challenge Point is awarded for each AT-AT successfully harpooned and tripped.



Priority: Top Secret
Transmission title: Echo Base Challenge Point Information
Challenge Points: Three

Our records show that there are 10 Challenge Points located in Echo Base. Collect these, but not at the expense of endangering your mission.

Challenge Point 1
From the Snow Speeder hangar, dispose of the Imperial forces and take the corridor on your right. Go through the door into the room with the red Cylinder. Opposite is a secret door operated with R. The Challenge Point is located inside.

Challenge Point 2
Leave the room with the Cylinder and continue down the corridor. On your right you should see a stack of four boxes obscuring a secret room. This room contains Challenge Point 2 and some health.

Challenge Point 3
Continue along the corridor and take a right turn towards the bridge. On the right, just before the bridge, is a small ledge containing Challenge Point 3.

Challenge Point 4
Cross the bridge and make your way carefully through the darkened section. Immediately the lights go on again, take a sharp right. Follow the ledge around for the fourth Challenge Point and some valuable Seeker ammo.









Transmission continues: Echo Base Challenge Point Information

Challenge Point 5
Make your way to the ramp, go to the right and jump into the cog room. Walk around the large cog to find Challenge Point 5.



Challenge Point 6
Go back to the ramp and climb it. When you see an Extra Life icon in the distance, jump carefully across the chasm to get it. When you turn around, you'll see Challenge Point 6 on your right.



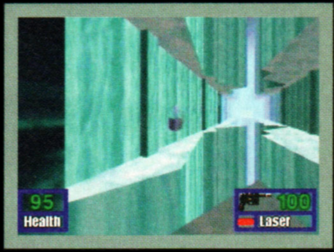
Challenge Point 7
Jump back from the Extra Life area and make your way to the bridge. Jump down and to the left from here to find Challenge Point 7.



Challenge Point 8
Challenge Point 8 is located on the right of the giant cog. Either jump down from the bridge on the right or across from the Challenge Point 7 area. To get back up to the bridge level, use the platforms around the edge of the Challenge Point 7 area.



Challenge Point 9
At the section with the long corridor where the ground begins to split, stand stationary at the beginning and wait for a Challenge Point to appear on your left.



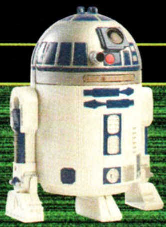
Challenge Point 10
Destroy the AT-ST and go down the corridor with the four stacked boxes. Shoot the Wampa imprisoned behind and make your way to the Chasm. The final Challenge Point is located across a large jump.



Additional: AT-ST
Alliance intelligence indicates that the Imperial AT-ST has a significant design weakness that can be utilised when engaging in ground combat. The arc of fire of the Walker's single gun cannot protect it from rear attack, and its underbelly is only weakly armoured. Intelligence suggests therefore that attack units keep underneath the unit, avoiding the legs, and use Z to fire directly upwards.







Priority: Top Secret
Transmission title: Asteroid field coordinates
Challenge Points: six

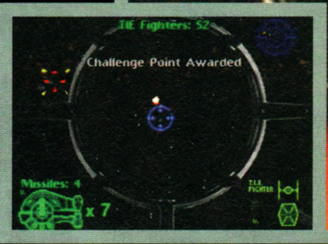
Hoth is surrounded by an asteroid field which prevents an immediate jump to light speed. Unfortunately, Imperial forces will try to block your path. Your priority in this confrontation should be the TIE Bombers and their green homing missiles. Use your laser cannon on the TIE Fighters and reserve your missile attacks for the bombers. Experience in previous encounters has shown that the Cockpit rather than the External targetting system is the most effective in combat.

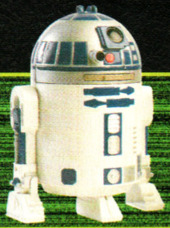


Additional: Challenge Points

Challenge Points are concealed in the red asteroids which have to be destroyed before the Challenge Point is awarded. The asteroids regenerate if not hit with consecutive shots. The most effective way to destroy them is with missiles.







Priority: Top Secret
Transmission title: Ord Mantell Challenge Points
Challenge Points: Twelve

Our spies indicate that there are 12 Challenge Points located in the Ord Mantell Junkyard. Collect these but do not endanger your mission.

Challenge Point 1
On the first train during the jumping and ducking section. Jump to collect.



Challenge Point 2
Jump over the first bar on the left-hand side of the train for Challenge Point 2.



Challenge Point 3
As the train turns to the left, the third Challenge Point is on the right about four bars after the second. Jump to collect.



Challenge Point 4
Kill the the skeleton guard and jump onto the boxcar train that arrives on your left. The Challenge Point is in the enclosed section.



Challenge Point 5
After the left-hand train has run into the mud, your train will start to climb. The fifth Challenge Point is above you (jump!) as the train passes through the opening in the wall.



Challenge Point 6
Move to the long boxcar train on the left. The sixth Challenge Point is in the third carriage along.



Challenge Point 7
Go to the carriage with the ramp running down the centre and climb up it. You can now access the Challenge Point floating between the carriages.

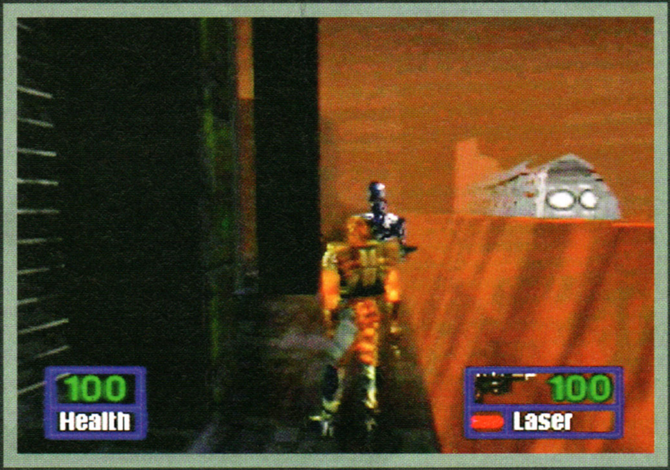
Challenge Point 8
In the last carriage of the train are two ledges with a Challenge Point hidden on the highest of the two. Jump up successively to access it.



Challenge Point 9
Challenge Point 9 is located on the right-hand side of the very last boxcar. Hurry back to the left-hand side to get on the locomotive.



Additional: Background information IG-88
A psychotic killer robot, IG-88 is to be approached with caution principally because of his speed and high weapons accuracy. Intelligence suggests that preventing this droid from gaining a height advantage in battle is vital. Any Rebel agents engaging IG-88 should therefore climb as high as possible, use rapid bursts of fire and move off quickly before they themselves can be targeted.



Challenge Point 10
Challenge Point 10 is located on the pile of junk where IG-88 initially stands.



Challenge Point 11
Climb carefully to the top of either red cylinder and drop down carefully inside to collect the eleventh Challenge Point. Use the door to exit from this area and be careful of the molten metal.

Challenge Point 12
Repeat the procedure for Challenge Point 11 on the other red cylinder.

GO! GO!



Priority: Top Secret
Transmission title: Gall Spaceport Challenge Points
Challenge Points: Fifteen

Informants have told us that there 15 Challenge Points located in the Gall Spaceport. This information cost the Alliance a lot of money in bribes. Use it wisely.

Challenge Point 1
On top of the Outrider. The rock provides a handy jumping up point.



Challenge Point 2
After walking around the ledge for quite a way, a branch to the right will lead to a raised rock formation. The Challenge Point is on top – you'll have to jump on the series of ledges to get it.



Challenge Point 3
Enter the first section of the Spaceport, travel on the lift to the section with the bridges and you'll find the Challenge Point located in mid air between the two. The safest way to collect this Point is to first collect the jet pack and then go back.



Challenge Point 4
Challenge Point 4 is on the roof of the observation tower. Jet up to get it.



Challenge Point 5
Jet to the first rock in the canyon and then across to the one on your right. The Challenge Point here is located far into the sky. You have enough fuel to get up to it but you'll have to turn your jet pack off once you have it to increase your rate of fall. Turn the pack back on before you hit the ground to avoid injury.



Challenge Point 6
In the cave with the skiff transport, jet down to the bottom of the chasm to pick up a Challenge Point and a full health pack.

Challenge Point 7
Before leaving this cave, walk to the front of it and jet pack out and to the left. There is a ledge near the top with the seventh Challenge Point and some Seeker ammo.

Challenge Point 8
After the Skiff ride, you'll arrive at the hangar. Before you enter, jet pack all the way across to the other side of the canyon to a ledge. Here you'll find the eighth Challenge Point and some Pulse ammo.

Challenge Point 9
After you've defeated the AT-ST, this Challenge Point will become available near the switches.



Challenge Point 10
In the section with the horizontal fans, the tenth Challenge Point is located between the second and third fan as you descend.



Challenge Point 11
In the large open cavern, after the fan section, the eleventh Challenge Point is high up against the wall on the left. Make sure you eliminate the enemy fire emanating from the upper reaches of the opposite side of the canyon before taking the Point.

Challenge Point 12
This Challenge Point appears midway through the second Skiff ride. Jump to get it.



Challenge Point 13
The thirteenth Challenge Point is hovering above the Imperial Freighter. Jet pack up.

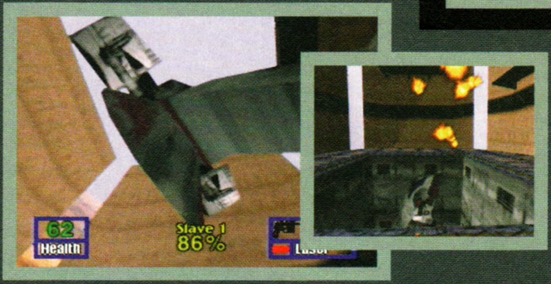


Challenge Point 14
The last two Challenge Points are located around Boba Fett's base. Jet pack out of the arena on to the level just above the canyon floor. Run around this area until you find the fourteenth Challenge Point. Ammo reserves are also located here.



Additional: Boba Fett
Rebel Intelligence has little to report on the bounty hunter Boba Fett. Believed to use a seeking-missile sidearm and flamethrower, agents are advised only to engage Fett at long distance and take swift evasive action from incoming missile fire. Agents equipped with a jet pack should make full use of it, collecting health packs and power ups as necessary.

Additional: Slave 1
Boba Fet's primary transport, Slave 1 is a modified Zeta Class ship. Rebel Intelligence suggests that these ships have a weak spot on their undersides. Agents are advised to tackle the ship from below with Seeker and Pulse Cannon fire. An alternative strategy would be to to climb above the ship, fire down on it from behind and drop down to fire up when the ship draws level.



Challenge Point 15
Jet down to the Canyon floor and run around until you can find a point where you can jump down lower. Down here you'll find a closed hangar door with a Challenge Point in front of it.

TO BE CONTINUED... Don't miss the second part of this guide in issue 3 of N64 Magazine.

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HOW TO...

get 70 stars as fast as possible in SUPER MARIO 64



Isn't it a bit odd, turning *SM64* into a speed challenge? Well, yes and no. Obviously we want you to explore it for yourself, taking all the time you need to learn the moves and locations in detail. If you're familiar with the special techniques shown in last month's **N64** then you're smart enough to get at least 70 stars without help. If not, you'd better grab an issue and consult our advice on Mario's moves.

Never fear, as we'll be covering all of the best-held secrets, hidden stars and sticking points too. Primarily, the Speed *Mario* Guide gives us a chance to reveal the numerous shortcuts and warps concealed within the game. Some of them will help you avoid frustrating tasks that can detract from a second or third replay, while others will test your absolute mastery of Mario's abilities. It's a credit to Nintendo that playing *SM64* in a different style actually leads you to discover different things. It's our belief that those of you who completed the game will find new reasons to go back and play it again – either for a new challenge, or to try out something you hadn't spotted.

Oh, and if you don't find at least one fact or shortcut within our guidethat's completely new to you, we'll eat Wil's Mah Jong tiles.

According to our Internet correspondents, the current record for all 120 Stars is 6 hours, 30 minutes. To beat the speed game with just seventy stars you should aim for around three hours to start with, or you could try the easier task of getting the first key in under 10 minutes. If you just want a quick test of your abilities, we've listed our own time challenges for certain fast courses and slide races.

COURSE 1

Bob-Omb's Battlefield

Best time: 9'20"

Stars

Star 1
Follow the nifty directions for Star 2 and you can somersault straight into conversation with King 'Bob'. He takes 3 throws before gracefully surrendering the game's first star. The 'fast' method is to stand still and let him walk towards you. He breaks into a turn very slowly after this, so you can get behind him and pick him up quickly.

Star 2
Long-jump-run to the flowerbed warp and head through the iron gates and up the cannonball run until you find Warp 2. As soon as you appear in the higher niche, rush out and reverse somersault for a shortcut to the plateau.

N64 Best Time: 0'37"4

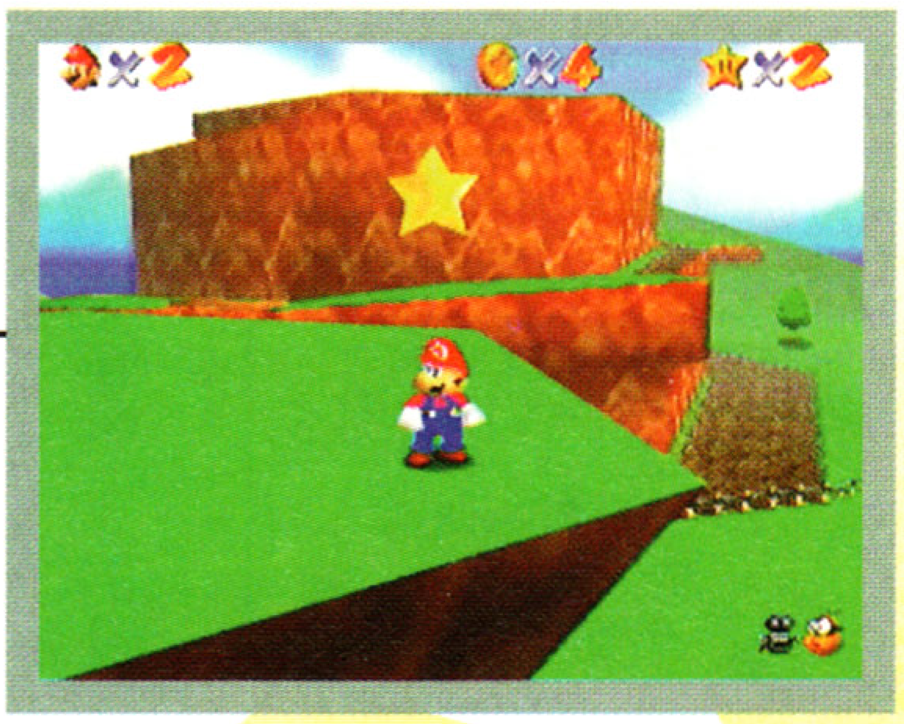


CHEAT!
Take the flowerbed warp again but zip into the nearby cannon for the shortcut. A poor loser, Koopa doesn't like being cheated with cannons.

N64 Best Time: 0'22"7

Koopa Challenge
However you do it, Koopa The Quick will still take around 1'25" to reach the flagpole. Nevertheless it seems a shame not to exploit that timer for multiple challenges, completed by fair means or foul. Hence, we've listed best times for getting the Star properly as well as a simple race to the flagpole in any way you care to devise.

Star 3
This is your first chance to use Shortcut 2. Bop that !-box on the floating island for another star in mere seconds.

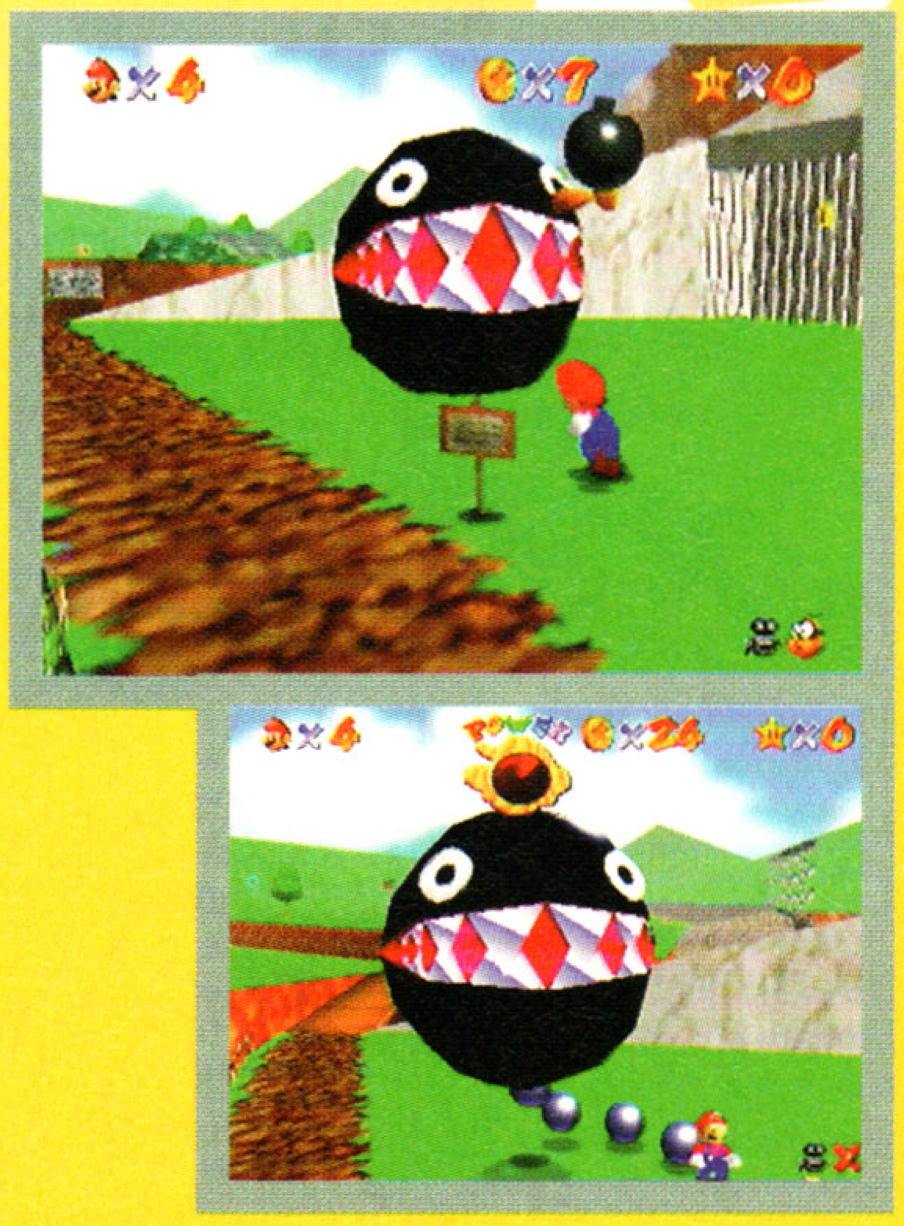


Star 4
Collecting all eight red coins prompts a star to appear. More on this next month, but leave the two red coins near the four posts till last for speed.

Star 5
With the floating island's cannon you can propel yourself through the coin rings suspended in the sky. Each ring has a 'special coin' at its centre, the star appearing below when you have all five. Return to this course when you have the Wing Cap, put it on and aim as shown to take the lot in one go.

Star 6
Forget other guides, here's the definitive **N64** hassle-free method. The star is imprisoned behind iron bars, guarded in turn by a Chain Chomp. Harumm...

Grab the nearby bomb and run towards the Chomp, aiming to pop it in his mouth before it explodes. When he's blown skywards, run in and stand right next to the wooden post. WAIT there while he returns to earth and alights on the post. Get a side-on view but keep still. When Chomp next makes a lunge for you, he's too high and misses. Now you have just enough time to climb on, jump and butt slam the wooden post three times without suffering a single hit. Chomp does the rest.



Bonus Star
Collecting 100 coins is faster with the Wing Cap. Launch yourself from the floating island, grab as many as possible and repeat until you know you can make up the remainder on the ground. If you gather the 100th coin in mid-air, see, the star is nigh-uncollectable.

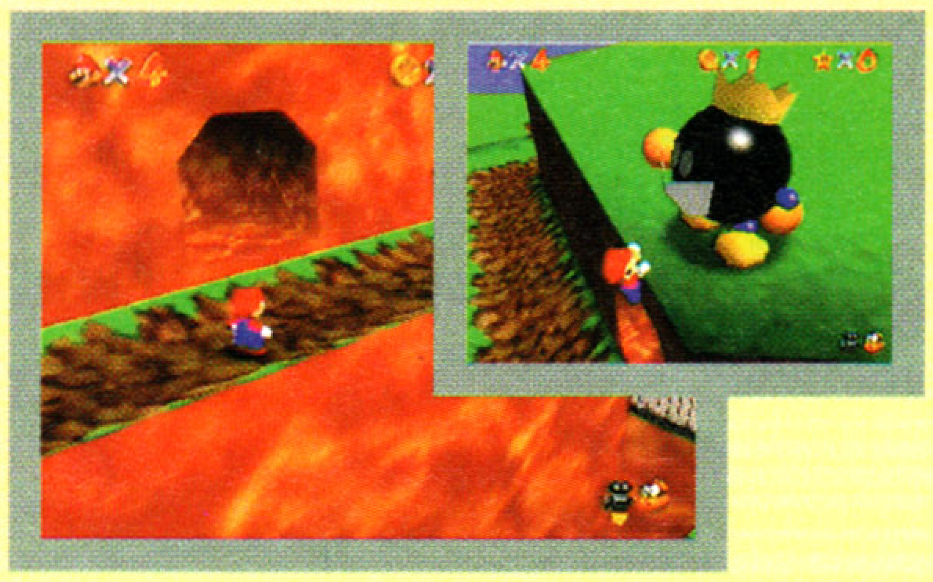
Warps and Shortcuts



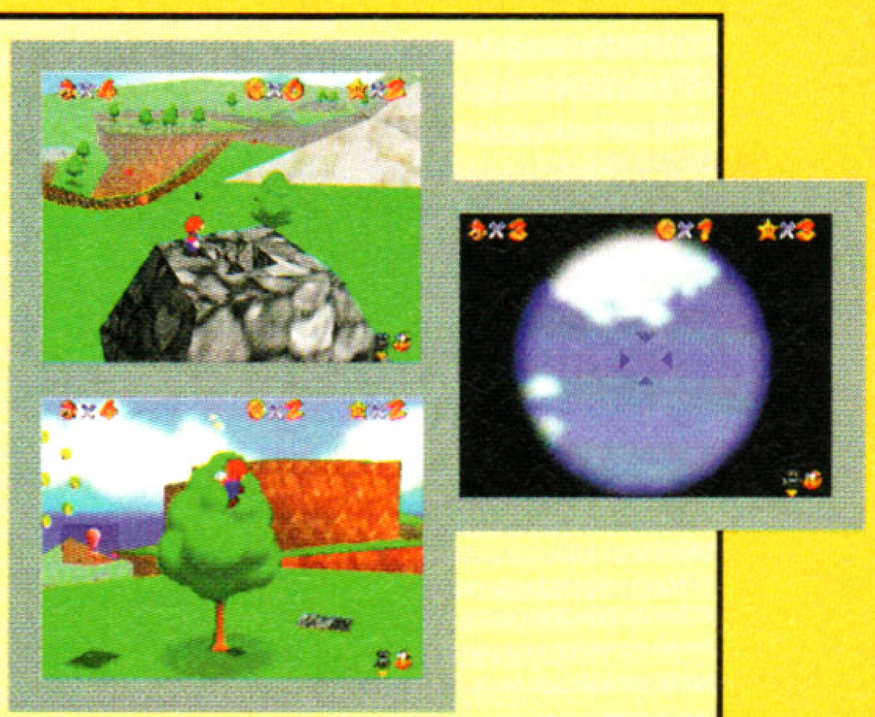
Warp 1
Standing still at the centre of the course's first flowerbed will warp you straight to the second. The third bed isn't a warp, but running around it to collect its coins will earn a 1-Up Mushroom.



Warp 2
The niches in the mountain side stop spewing forth their deadly cannonballs when you approach. Stand inside to be warped from one to another. On the way up, this neat teleport eliminates much of the winding mountain trail.



Shortcut 1
Talk to the Pink Bomb after the King's defeat to be granted access to the cannons. Of special note is the emplacement in the black rock. Aim your sights to recreate a target looking something like this and, incredibly, you can just scrape yourself onto the mountain plateau at a perfect angle and land running with a press of A or B.



Shortcut 2
Head up the ramp and cut over the fence towards the first greystone cannon emplacement. If you can aim your sights in precisely the position shown (note the cloud detail) you'll catch the treetop, thus reaching the floating island without a Wing Cap or mountain cannon.



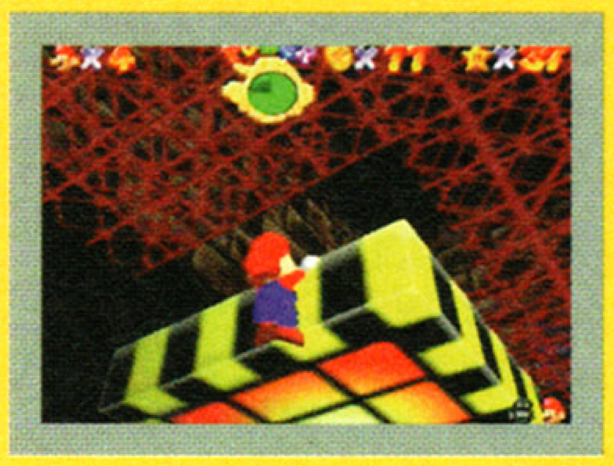
GO! GO!

Speedy Techniques

● Do a Z+A long jump, keep Z held but tap A again as soon as you touch down for another long jump. Repeating this process on the straights gets you around very, very quickly indeed, especially if you squish a Goomba on the way. Long jump at the base of a slope or staircase for climbing power.



● When a lift is going down, you're free to drop off the side for a quicker descent. No loading times between levels here, remember. Make sure you brake with a butt slam, or a faster B, B dive into a run, else you'll waste time recovering. And possibly break your neck.



● In the long run, it can be deceptively speedy to go for 100 coins by including all the reds. You'll earn two stars for the one task, not to mention extra lives when you leave the course.

● Stuck up a pole? Hit Z to drop quickly or press A to jump directly backwards.

● Some 1-Up mushrooms will deliver themselves to you. Try jumping backwards from the top of any pole that rewards you for a handstand and you'll see what we mean. Others seem less inclined to be eaten, or perhaps they just like the thrill of the chase. To save time, ignore any mushroom that looks a bit reluctant to boost your lives.

COURSE 2

Whomp's Fortress

Stars

Star 1

Use the warp and climb the flagpole until you can jump backwards to the boss arena. The quickest technique for the Giant Whomp is to run in front of him then push between his legs, doing a reverse somersault as he tumbles and butt-slamming from this to finish. All over in 1'10", we reckon.







Star 2

Follow the directions for Star 1 and – CRUNCH! "AARGH!" – you'll discover that a tall spire has replaced the boss. If you make the first platform you can scale the tower's retracting platforms without pause (did somebody say *Nebulus*?) and backflip to render the last lift redundant.





Star 3

Want a star in 40 seconds? It's a neat shortcut to run towards the blue switch, turn away from the wall, reverse somersault and wall-kick up onto the lower brick ledge for this star. Or would be, if you didn't need to activate the cannons anyway. Your choice.



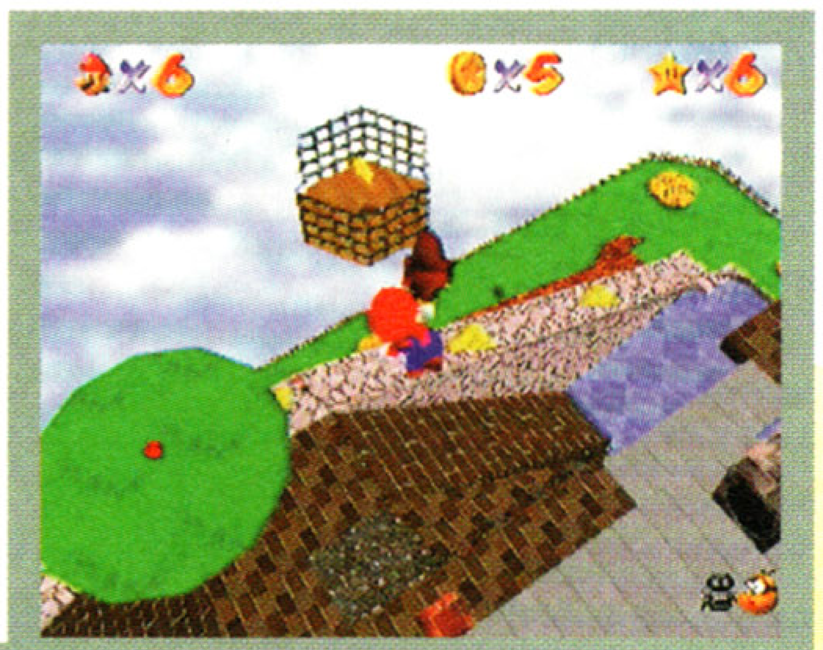


Star 4

Using the owl shortcut, you can reach the rotating islands without ever jump-kicking that wooden plank bridge.The only red coin you're likely to miss is directly above the highest Thwomp block. Take the first ramp and jump onto its head – it's safe – to be carried upwards.

Star 5

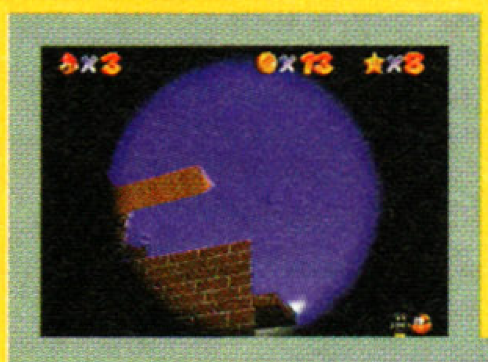
The cage holding the star is suspended above the rotating islands. Use our listed shortcut to turn a difficult jump into a simple bird ride and use your shadow to tell when to drop.





Star 6

Jump into the cannon and look up to the revolving wooden bridge. Turn to the furthest brick wall as shown and aim slightly high. When launched, your Roman projectile will lop off the corner to expose a fiendishly hidden star within the bricks. Another cannon shot will claim it.





Bonus Star

Diving at the dozy Piranha Plants (run and hit B) is a quicker way to dispatch them for 5 coins than all that creeping about you've been taught.

Warps and Shortcuts

Warp

Race up the first slope towards the blue Thwomp blocks and slide down the brown bricks to the far corner. Stand here to be teleported to the huge flagpole, thus bypassing the revolving bridge.





Shortcut

With the first three stars under your belt, climbing to the top of the tree rudely disturbs an owl who will carry you skywards if you catch his talons. He sinks gradually as he tires, so you really do have to plan your route as the, er, crow flies.



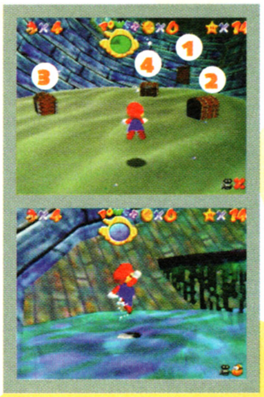
COURSE 3

Jolly Roger Bay

Stars

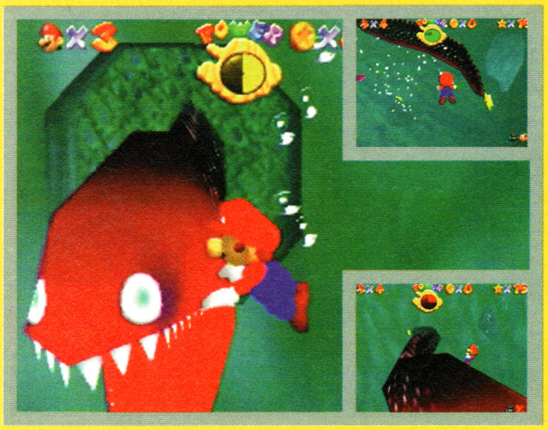
Star 1

The trick to getting the Giant Eel to evacuate is to swim right up beside the ship's hatch, then make for the surface. On your return he'll be gone. Once inside, open the chests in the order shown. As soon as you've opened the last chest, forget the air bubble and swim like the clappers toward the !-box. You can make it all the way to the highest platform in the ship before the water level drops too far, thus avoiding the slippery steps altogether.



Star 2

Swim to the Moray's refuge and hassle him from the side again. He'll lash out briefly, then leave his reed bed. The star is on his tail, and you can grab it quickly if you wait at the side and make a lunge when it first emerges from the reeds. He'll return to his lair, eventually, if you wait.



Star 3

Swim to the far side of the cove and look for a submerged tunnel leading to a smuggler's cave. At the far end is another booby-trapped chest puzzle, solved in this order:



Star 4

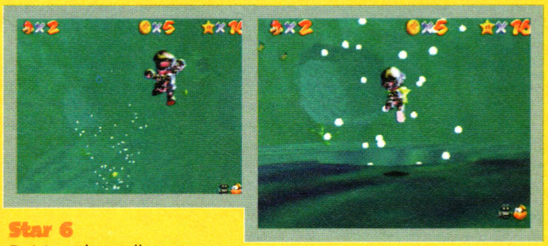
Aim your cannon to the rocky pinnacle near the Pink Bomb, get the green Cap and dive towards the deeper water of the bay. Raid the clams on your way back to shore, then shortcut to the ship's deck to finish.



Star 5

Jump into the cannon and aim to grab one of the distant rocky pinnacles (the central one has a 1-Up). From here you can back-jump or handspring to a ledge with a yellow !-box. The star is inside.





Star 6

Raising the galleon exposes a bubble vent on the ocean bed. To overcome the upward force of the rising air you'll need to become Terminator Mario. Of the three in this level, you want to use the green cap box near the purple !-switch and long-jump into the sea. Guide your fall, stroll into the bubbles and jump for the star.

Bonus Star

There are only 104 coins in the entire level. You can't miss a single Goomba.

Warps and Shortcuts

Shortcut

The course cannon is just a long jump from the beach. Aim the cannon like this, between the pinnacles, to fly straight to the deck of the raised ship.



Star Schedule

You'll reduce those wasted seconds running around the castle if you have a rough plan to follow. Activating the cap switches as soon as possible (see last month's **N64**) makes some courses criminally simple, so here's a handy accessibility guide to check against your Star tally.

1 Star – Course 2 and Peach Slide
3 Stars – Course 3-4
8 Stars – Star Door to Dark World 1
8 Stars – Dungeon opens*
10 Stars – Tower of the Wing Cap
12 Stars – Course 6 Boos appear
20 Stars – Rabbit appears in dungeon
20 Stars – Talk to Toad by Course 6 pool
30 Stars – Star Door to Course 9
31 Stars – Dark World 2**
31 Stars – Courses 10-13*
31 Stars – Talk to Toad on Castle's second floor
50 Stars – Courses 14-15
50 Stars – That pesky wabbit is back
50 Stars – Talk to Toad on Castle's third floor
70 Stars – Dark World 3
120 Stars – absolute completion and – well, more next month!

* beat Bowser for the key
** requires submarine star from Course 9



GO! GO!

COURSE 4

Cool Cool Mountain

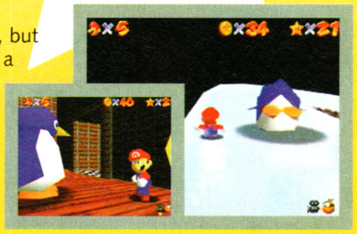
Stars



Star 1
Just jump into that chimney, as ordered, and use one of our shortcuts for a craftily brief slide race. The Star won't appear until you leave the log cabin.



Star 2
Your task is to deliver the baby penguin above the chimney to the mother at the mountain base. That's 'task' because you're unable to run, punch, teleport or make complex jumps while carrying. The speed method uses shortcut 3: drop to the wooden platform, start sliding down around the mountain but fall off the first corner and plummet.



Star 3
Another slide race below the chimney, but this time you're jostling for track with a giant penguin competitor. The stickler refuses to surrender his star if you use either of our shortcuts.



Star 4
A tricky red is found by riding the slope down around the mountain and jumping off the side where it becomes a fenced bridge. Check every corner.





Star 5
Want to build a snowman? With four stars, a suitable 'body' appears on the wooden plinth near your starting point. Engage in conversation, then slide to the bottom of the mountain with the snowball in tow. It will always steer slowly towards Mario, so position him behind the head's plinth and draw the snowball into a collision course.

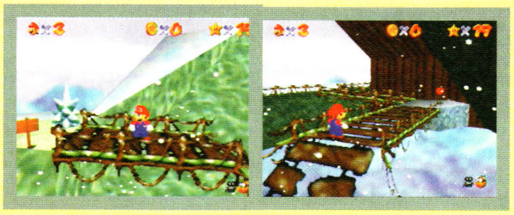
Star 6
Use the cannon to reach this distant tree and follow the narrow precipice to a heart restorer. A single wall-kick at the end will place you at the base of a ramp. From the top of the ramp, run away from the back wall, reverse somersault and wall kick to reach the glassy walkway and the star.

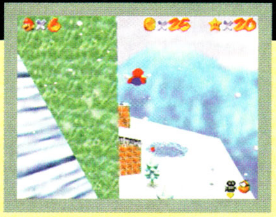


Bonus Star
With the warp you can slide down the mountain both inside and outside before looking for blue switches, red coins and things to kill.

Warps and Shortcuts

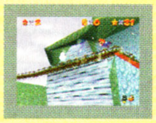
Warp 1
Look for a broken bridge behind your starting point. The warp point is unalluringly located on those dodgy slats at the very end, and transports you to another wrecked bridge at the base of the mountain. The reverse journey is the only way to get back up to the summit.





Shortcut 2
To activate the cannons you'll need to leap to the Pink Bomb from the rickety lift. Instead of waiting for the lift to return, just long jump towards the log cabin. You'll be picked up and carried by an invisible current of air.

Shortcut 3
More of a technique, really. Even if you don't flop, dive or slam, you can jump into soft snow from incredible altitudes without taking damage. Hammer the buttons to pluck yourself free.



Shortcut 1 & 4
These tricks apply to the ice slide. When you first encounter a wall on the right side of the track, lean hard into it or look for a line of coins indicating a secret section where you can pass straight through the ice. The speed tunnel propels you to a ledge above the finishing line.

However, the expert's shortcut is found after the first bend, where the track makes a small vertical drop. Instead of cornering after the line of coins, fly straight off the edge but don't hit the wall. You'll plummet straight to final tunnel, some stick adjustment and a timely tap of B dropping you safely on the ice.





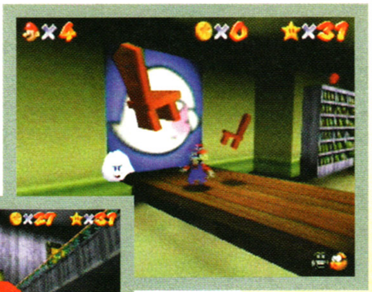
COURSE 5

The Ghost House

The largest Boo in the castle gardens actually holds the entrance to the ghost house within his ectoplasm: you can see the tiny cage when you look him in the eye.

Stars

Star 1
As in previous *Mario* games, the Boos halt when you face them. You could try running around and punching or diving at them, but the best method is to face away, somersault or backflip and hit Z in mid-air to butt-slam. Destroy five Little Boos and return to the entrance hall for a Big Boo Battle.





Star 2
Repeat the process in the spooky carousal below the small outhouse. Another Big Boo will try to see you off.





Star 3
With the stairs raised, find the library on the upper floor and Z+A leap through the books. At the very end you must simply hit or headbutt the three protruding editions in the order middle, right, left to reveal a secret door.

Star 4
One of the red coins requires caution: if you slip through the adjacent trapdoor, you'll have to waste precious minutes travelling back from the carousal to the house.

Star 5
Use the shortcut to reach the attic and look for a door between the skylights. When you step outside you'll have to do battle with the last Big Boo, but the real problem is acquiring the star on top of the roof. Long jump to the sloping roof on either wing and scramble up to a ledge where you can stop (the fixed camera angles don't help). Switch to Mario-cam and clamber up to a flat straight running the width of the house, from which you can slide down to the star.

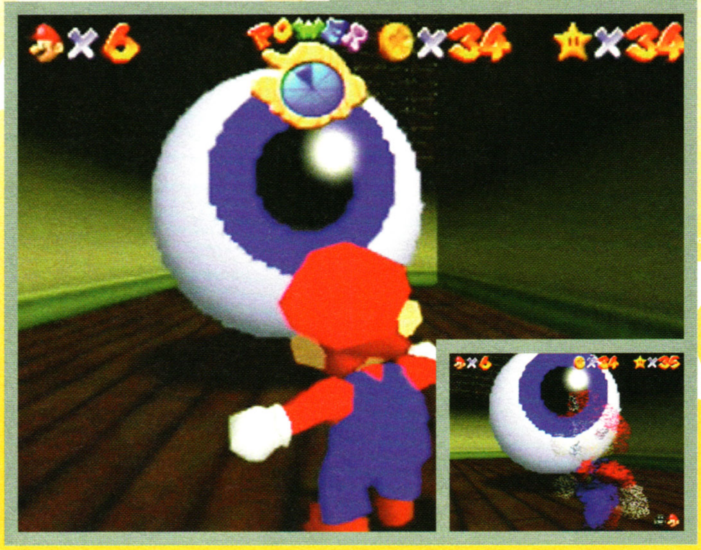






Star 6
The attic also holds a secret back room (hang around and you'll see a ghost appear). Speedily, you need to grab the blue cap on the upper floor before using the wall-kick shortcut; then run through this partition and defeat the eyeball boss by running rings around him when his pupil locks onto you.

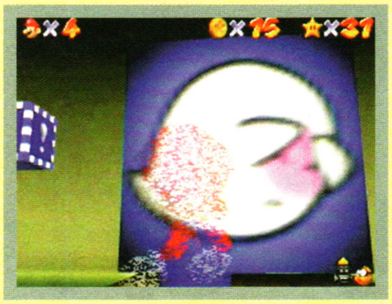




Bonus Star
All those ghost-busting opportunities will pay off with regular blue coinage, so this isn't too hard.

Warps and Shortcuts

Shortcut 1
Don't try this course until the blue cap blocks are enabled. While wearing one you can pass straight through these blue partitions and find quick routes or secret areas in the ghost house.



Shortcut 2
The only way to get to the attic of the ghost house is to do a wall-kick opposite this bookcase. If you can grab on to the wooden platform above, you'll find a door.



COURSE 6

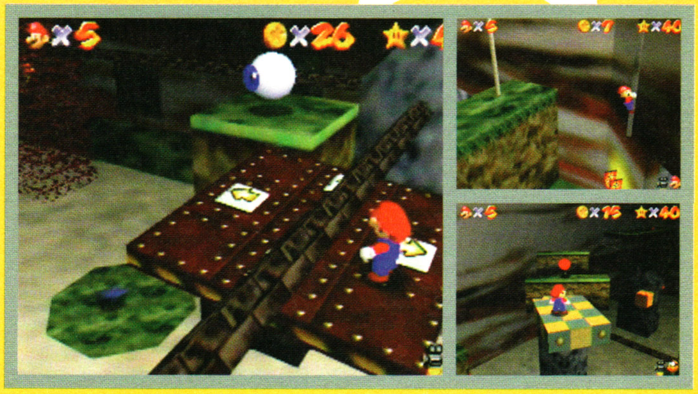
Hazy Maze Cave

Stars

Star 1
Left-hand fork, past the boulders, through the door, down the lift and then the pole – keep up, keep up! – and first left. Swim to Nessie's tail and run up her back. Stand on her head and face the way you wish to guide her, jumping to the central island when you're near enough.



Star 2
The eight red coins are all found in one room. When you take the pole down, jump backwards off it to reach the other and step onto the chequered platform. Punch the cork blocks en route but don't jump off for too long or it will vanish.

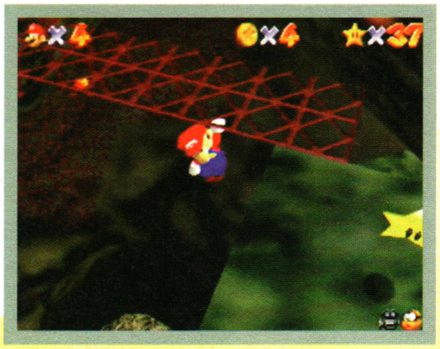


Star 3
Delve to Nessie's cavern as before, this time grabbing the green cap on the shore. The brown path leading down continues underwater, so follow it to a submerged purple !-switch that only Terminator Mario can step on. The red gates nearby will swing open. On the other side of the door, your continuous Z+A running technique will propel you neatly across both chasms.

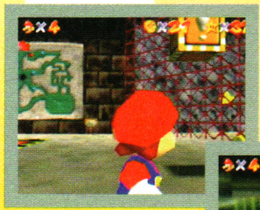




Star 4
Follow our shortcut instructions, clipping straight through the red mesh. Double jump and keep the button held to grab onto the ceiling: now you can handswing out over the sinkhole, reaching the high ledge with its waiting star.

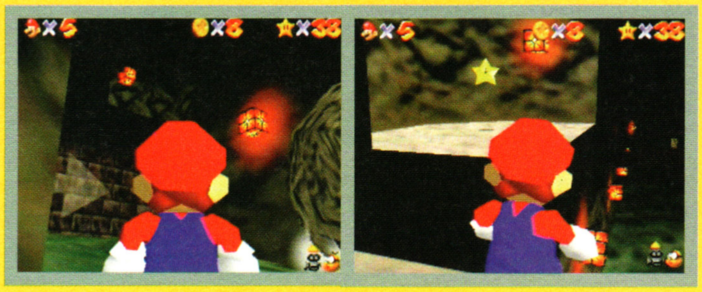


Star 5
Take the shortcut again, this time heading through the high door to work your way back to Hazy Maze. After the lift corridor you'll step into a chamber in the maze wall, safely above the deadly layer of gas. Look left to see a similar recess further on. All you have to do is drop down and run to it, reverse flipping to grab the stained lip, and climb in. The passage beyond leads to a star you saw earlier.





Star 6
As soon as you've dodged past the point where the boulders come crashing down, switch to headcam and look up. See those lamps above the door at the end? Just use wall kicks back and forth to climb up to this ledge, where the last cunningly-stashed star awaits.



Bonus Star
You won't score the century without a venture into Hazy Maze, sadly, so skip this star if possible. The blue switch conjures seven blue coins and is guarded by plenty of boppable bad guys, but you can remain permanently invincible with regular trips to the cap blocks. The entrance maps are authentic, so make notes.

Warps and Shortcuts





Shortcut
From the start of the course, take the left fork and long-jump to the door. Once through, run around the enormous sinkhole to where you'd normally leap across to the boulder shoot. Instead, run back along this ledge and reverse somersault at the wall, using a wall kick to get even higher. Amazingly, you'll slip straight through the red gauze to an area normally reached via Hazy Maze.

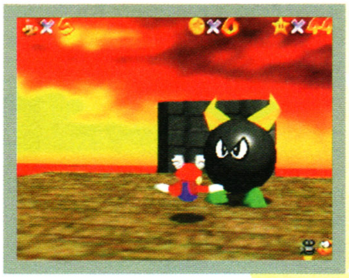
COURSE 7
The Sea of Lava

Best time: 7'20" (6 stars)

This course is criminally easy (and slightly cheap) if you have the Wing Cap before attempting it. You can get around the lava quite safely by flying, but may need to make Z-trigger stops for a re-launch to regain height in some places. We favour the middle hump with the 1-Up.

Stars

Star 1
Fly to the boss and land on his platform. Our technique is to stand at the edge and jump when the bomb charges, extending this jump slightly with a B-tap air kick. If you can land on the other side of the bomb, you'll slide down its curved surface and push it away with getting knocked around yourself. Your first star acquired before the Wing Cap fades!





Star 2
This is done exactly as Star 1, except that the Big Bomb won't appear until you've defeated the three horned bombs at the opposite corner of the course.

Star 3
All red coins are easily found on the sliding Bowser puzzle. Just watch for a shaking tile to know where the lava 'gap' is going to appear next. The puzzle also rewards you with five gold coins for standing on the completed picture.



Star 4
This protected star sits behind the barred corner of the level. To reach it you must ride the cage raft, dodge rising flame jets, climb on the log and jump to its far side, running along at a diagonal so that you keep it rolling slowly to the other side of the lava.

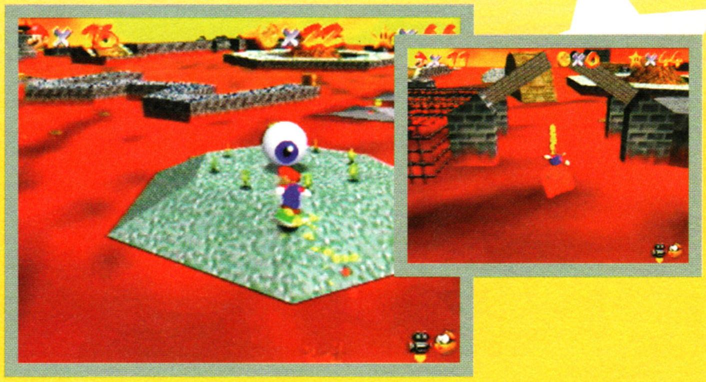
Heh, of course you don't. Just make two Cap flights, with a stop-over near the three horned bombs, and fly straight to it. Now this is definitely cheating...



Star 5
When you take the volcano shortcut you'll find there are two routes inside. The easier one takes you spiralling up the outer ledges to a narrow bridge. Jump from pole to pole but ignore the last one – you can handspring to the star from the top of the third, winning a 1-Up into the bargain.

Star 6
The harder volcano route starts with a chequered lift ride. Swap lifts briefly before jumping to the pole. Climb ALMOST to the top and switch to a long Mario-cam view. As soon as one flame jet has passed, handstand on top and aim to jump directly for the higher pole you can see. A little mid-air fiddling should secure a grip.

Bonus Star
After four stars, a yellow !-box with a Koopa Shell appears near your starting point. With it you can ride safely over the lava, suddenly discovering an entire racing course of banks and humps. If you're skilled, you won't need to venture into the volcano for 100 stars (though it can be good for a speedy handful).

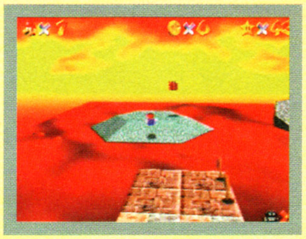


Warps and Shortcuts

Warp 1
If you don't rate your long-jumps, follow the course normally and cross the cantilever bridge to a rolling eyeball. Defeat it and drop into the cage below to be warped straight to the Wing Cap island.



Warp 2
This is really an entrance to another section of the course. While the central volcano is inactive, use a Wing Cap, Koopa Shell or long-jump to drop down inside. You'll find a whole new subterranean area to explore.



Shortcut
As soon as you enter the level, turn around and long-jump with Z+A to a stone island with a red cap block. From here, you can fly to wherever you like.

GO! GO!

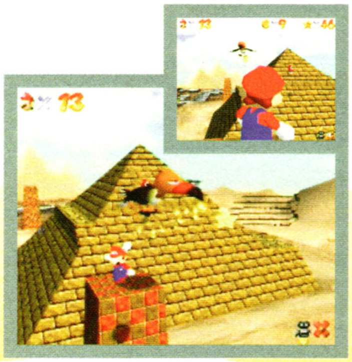
COURSE 8

The Treacherous Sands

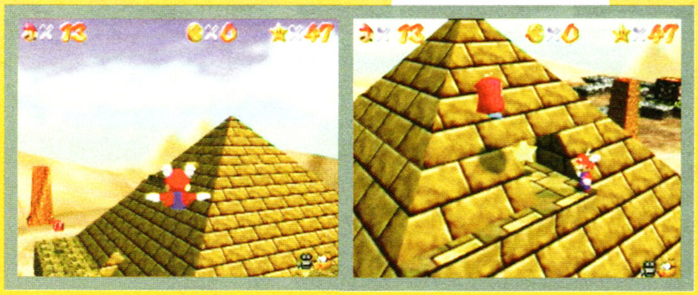
The very entrance to this mysterious course is hidden; though if you've been chasing the bunny, you might well have dived into the wall of the dungeon's 'dead end' already...

Stars

Star 1
Look into the distance and you'll see a circling vulture with a familiar shiny object in its talons. Although it's always on the move, it likes to frequent the far red brick pillars on the other side of the pyramid; so grab a 'transport' to the top and simply jump at it when it approaches. Note the odd physics model by which you can just walk, magneto-boots fashion, up the sides of the four pillars.



Star 2
Using a Wing Cap and a steady thumb, simply get onto the roof of the pavilion as in Shortcut 1 and launch yourself from the edge, aiming for the entrance of the pyramid. The second star is in a recess just above the entrance, normally reached by negotiating the ledges, but you can reach it in a single flight by pulling back slightly to maintain a steady cruising height.

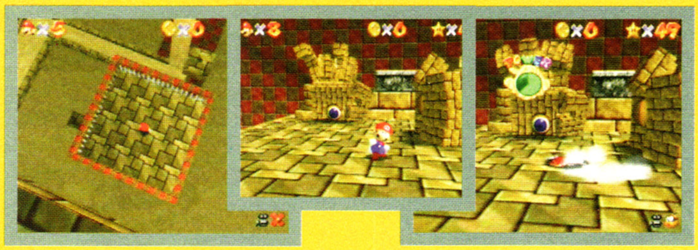


Star 3
Once inside the pyramid, head right and work your way to the top with our shortcuts. If you happen to fall into the sands below, keep jumping to stay afloat and use the shallow stepping stones to reach the higher ones. The third star is on the very highest ledge.

Star 4
Ignore any nonsense you've read about falling to grab ledges – some magazines just don't know what they're talking about. Grab the Wing Cap, fly to the nearest red pillar and stop on it with a butt slam (hold Top C to follow your shadow). Then jump three times and take off for the next one, doing the same until you've stood still on the tops of all four brick pillars. Master, the pyramid – it go BOOM! Yes, the top of the pyramid explodes and another entrance is revealed.

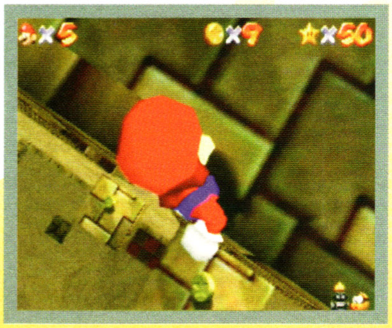
Drop inside and you'll ride a cage down to the centre of the pyramid, stopping over the whirlpool of sand. Now you can climb inside that mysterious tunnel.

A gratifyingly tougher boss than most, the stone fists have one obvious weakness: while one is smashing you, the other has to open the eye in its palm. Run at the eye and dive at it, or punch it, or kick it, but definitely hurt it in some way. And again, and again, until the fist explodes. To win you must risk being swept off, as the remaining fist only opens its eye to charge. Get that strike in quickly.



Star 5
Use the warp and fly from the cannon to grab the four red coins in the air. Skilled flying is necessarily, but the sneakiest of the reds is actually placed in the open, directly behind your starting position, at the very corner of the course. Tread carefully.

Star 6
Inside the pyramid, make your way to the top once more. Just under the ledge holding Star 3 is a gap on your right where you can look over at the falling stream of sand. You'll see three ledges below that hold special gold coins, and two more coins in the sand chute at the bottom. Drop down at the right places and collect all five coins to reveal the last star.



Warps and Shortcuts



Warp
Stand in the shade of the oasis palm tree and before you know it you'll be looking at a Wing Cap and a cannon emplacement. In fact, you'll never have to face another rolling cage cube to complete this course.

Shortcut 1
You can use a reverse somersault, a triple flip or even a bounce from a red flyguy to get on the stone roof of the first building. However you do it, you'll find a choice of transports to carry you over the sand traps. One box contains a Wing Cap, the other has a Koopa Shell.





Shortcut 2
Once inside the pyramid, head right and use a triple flip or reverse somersault to get straight to the pole leading to the third storey. A triple or wall kick will also get you on top of a climbing frame further on, thus swapping slow handswings for speedy long jumps.

Shortcut 3
Although they look dangerous, you can ride most moving blocks or use them as steps. The one to the left of the entrance even carries you to a 1-Up. Our favourite sub-game is to double jump or reverse flip over the one they (um, that is, we) call The Rolling Pin. More fun than dodging into the cubbyhole provided because, if you don't clear it, you end up doing a spot of log-rolling...



COURSE 8
Dire, Dire Docks

This course is actually quite slow, and hasn't any major warps or shortcuts, but needs to be entered if you're to open up Bowser's Fire Sea arena. You'll find it behind the second Star Door, and we'll cover it in detail next month. For now...

Stars

Star 1

The normal way to get onto the deck of Bowser's submarine is to hit the purple !-switch and create a cork block staircase at the side. That's no good for us speedsters.

Swim to the back of the sub, surface beside its propeller and face to the front. Jump out of the water with down+A to land on one of the flat tail fins. As you touch down, hit A again to double jump – this time pushing forward to land centrally on the sloped aft section. Another perfectly-timed jump from here turns the whole manoeuvre into a triple flip, placing you firmly on the ship's wooden deck. Taa-daa! Wasn't that more fun?







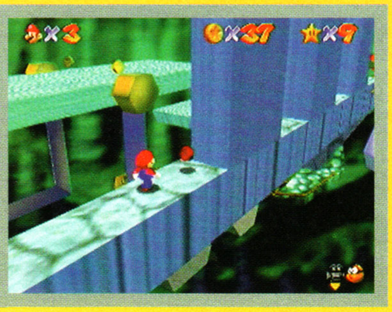
Bowser's Dark Worlds – 1

Unless you've got Terminator Mario at your disposal, the hidden star for eight red coins is very tricky, though still possible. The first purple !-switch you come across will activate cork blocks near the first flame jet AND behind your starting point, from which you can grab the coins.

Cut out any waiting around for the second fire jet and by-pass it with a reverse somersault to the ramp on the left. If you're not collecting coins, there's a major speedcut to make with a Z+A long jump from the grey block with the sliding yellow bridge to the huge spike on the circular platform that you can see in the distance.

When you first step onto the second see-saw bridge, let it rise at the other end and use it as a ramp to the the upper platform. From here you can reach the hidden star's platform before jumping to the purple !-switch, missing out the stairs entirely.





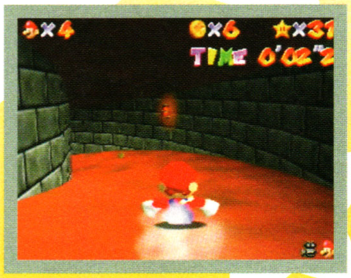
BOWSER

There's nothing to stop you running in and grabbing the Evil Shelled One before he takes his first deep breath. If you find aiming hard, chuck him gently just a little way and run in to grab his tail again before he recovers. Gradually, you can move him in this fashion until you're practically standing beside a spiked bomb.

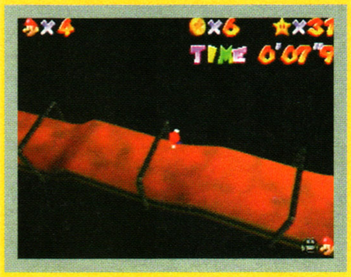
Peach Slide

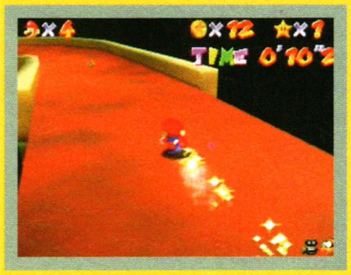
Best time: 0'16"3

From the castle's main hall you can reach an apparently empty room with three stained glass 'Peach' windows. Jump through the right window for a secret slide race. There are two hidden stars to find on this course. For the normal star, just hang on to the finish. Cross the grid in or under 0'21"0 for an extra one.



You can achieve a superfast time with a shortcut: leap left over the low barrier when you first emerge from the grey corridor and guide your drop to a lower section of the slide. Our top technique is to break Mario's fall with a B button dive rather than a butt slam. Time it right and you'll simply flop into the last stretch, racing to the line on your belly without losing momentum. We suspect less than 16 seconds is possible.





NEXT MONTH

We'll be dissecting the remaining courses, and locating the other 50 stars, in N64 issue 3, and we've already lined up plenty of shortcuts to reveal, secrets to unearth and challenges to tax the expert player. What kind of misguided fool would want to miss that?

You're through to... THE NINTENDO PROBLEMS...

Beavering away in some cart-stacked office are a team of dedicated gamers, blowing apart N64 games in search of answers to the questions you ask. They are the Nintendo Hotline, and every month in N64 Magazine they answer their most-asked questions here on these very pages. We'd really ought to let them get on with it, then...

Since the release of the N64, it's been calls a go-go in the Hotline office. And just in time to avoid the sudden deluge of extra work, our former manager and illustrious leader, Jon, sneaks off to the marketing department amidst muffled cheers and much throwing of plastic cups. Taking his place, in the red corner, strides Richard Cousins, much maligned for having an appearance similar to that of the Incredible Hulk (post terrifying Banner transformation).

Along with this swift re-shuffle of the management comes the implementation of the New Staff! (Cue musical trills and drum rolls.) In order to cope with the tremendous number of calls we are now receiving every day, we have recruited two new full-time members of staff, and six part-timers who cover peak hours during the day. This cuh-razy hiring of staff swells our ranks to a mighty, er, 13. Onwards...

WHAT IS THE NINTENDO HOTLINE?

We're a team of expert games players who use our vast knowledge of all things Nintendo to help gamers in distress. Staff selection is very strict, so you can always be confident that when you talk to a councillor, they are one of the finest gamesplayers in the country and the perfect coach for your gaming skills.

Open seven days a week, 365 days of the year, the Hotline deals with over 2000 calls a day, spread over the various Nintendo platforms. To guarantee that your call will be answered quickly and your problem answered swiftly, we have doubled our staff and increased our weekend opening hours.

Call us on **(01703) 652222** (NOT a premium rate number) and pose your game questions. We should be able to provide you with the answers, whether they're directions, cheats, passwords or simple advice. The Hotline is open Monday to Friday 12pm to 8pm, and Saturday and Sunday 10am to 6pm.

If games aren't challenging, then they're no fun at all. Getting completely stuck is a nightmare, though, and the Nintendo Hotline are there to help you through. This month they've been receiving lots of calls about *Super Mario 64* (unsurprisingly) and *Shadows of the Empire*. Here are the things you want to know.

Top 10 Super Mario 64 questions you've asked this month

Q Where are the 'poles' referred to in course 10, when it says 'Pole Jumping for Red Coins'?

A The poles won't appear until you've defeated Bowser in the Fire Sea, the entrance to which appears in front of the course entrance after you've completed the first two stars.

Q How do you retrieve your cap from the snowmen on Snowman's Land?

A Wait until they surface from the snow, then SLOWLY walk around them until they collapse. You should then be able to grab your cap.

Q Where's the igloo on course 10?

A From the start of the course, walk northeast to the large freezing pond. Jump on the Spindrift that emerges from the water and use the power of the 'Boing' to get over the brick wall on the other side. In the yellow exclamation box to the right is a shell, which you can ride back across the lake and up the side of the snowman. (Follow the trail of coins.) The igloo is just up to the top of the slope.

Q Star 4 on Shifting Sand Land says 'Stand Tall on the Four Pillars.' How do you get to the star?

A First of all, grab the flying cap from on top of the stone building (a double jump gets you up). Then fly to each of the four large stone pillars at the corners of the pyramid and land on each one. Once you've stood on all four, the top of the pyramid will fly off, revealing a secret entrance. The star's inside!



Q I've only found 14 of the castle's secret stars! Where's the last one?

A Bit of a toughie, this. The castle secret stars can be obtained in almost any order, so here's a breakdown of where they're all found:
- Two on the Princess' secret slide.
- Two from the yellow rabbit in the sewers.
- One from the secret aquarium (in the same room as course 3).
- One from Mario over the Rainbow (through the hole in the Clock Room).
- Three from Toad on different floors of the castle.
- Three from the Bowser confrontations (collect the red coins).
- Three from the Switch Palaces.

Okay? Sorted.

☎ (01703) 652222

HOTLINE

Q How do you get Star 1 on course 13?

A Enter the course as Big Mario (through the left-hand painting) and long jump from where you start over to the green pie. Enter the pipe and, when you re-emerge, defeat the five Piranha Flowers that appear to gain a star.

Q How do I reach the Pink Bomb on Wet-Dry World?

A The easiest way we've found is to flood the course to the highest level possible, using the crystal on top of the curving stone ramp. Then, while stood on the floating wooden platform beneath the bomb, long jump at the side wall, and then wall kick away to land next to him. This sounds harder than it actually is.

Q On course 5 how do you get to Big Boo's Balcony?

A Go into the Ghost House and climb the stairs to the second floor. Take the second door from the right and wall kick from the platform at the back of the room up to the ledge above the door. This new room contains a door that leads out to the balcony.



Q Can you control Mario with the normal D-Pad?

A (The sound of heads being beaten against wood.)

Shadows Of The Empire

Q How do you defeat the AT-ST on level 2?

A The best way to defeat this boss is to stay behind and shoot it in the back. If you stand behind and beneath it and use Z to fire upwards, you'll find you'll destroy it quicker than a very quick thing.

Q How do you defeat IG-88 on the Junkyard level?

A There's a very easy trick to this. When this part of the level starts, head through the opening in the wall to your left. Climb up the long ramp, and, at the top, find the two alcoves, one of which is full of scrap metal. Stand in this alcove between the two red chunks of metal and wait for IG-88 to appear. Keep shooting – he won't be able to touch you.

Q How do I open the door in the sewers in the large room full of water?

A You need to find the Door Security Key. From the door, turn to your right and you should see an open pipe sticking out of the right-hand wall. Enter this pipe and follow the pretty-much one-way path to the room with the key in.

Q Where can I get the Disruptor weapon?

A This weapon is only to be found in the later stages of the game. You can't get it in the first couple of levels.

Q Can you destroy the Star Destroyer in the last level?

A No! Even though it has a percentage marker below it, you can't harm it at all. The programmers just put it in to waste your time and missiles.

HOTLINE TIPS

More game secrets we've dredged up

Killer Instinct Gold
(Nintendo)

Character Ultimates
Maya: HCB, F and MK
Glacius: HCB, F and MK
Jago: Forwards, Down, Down-Forwards, FK
TJ Combo: Hold QK for two seconds, release QK
Sabrewulf: Hold FK for two seconds, release FK
Spinal: Down, Down, QK
Tusk: Forward, Down, Down-Forwards, MK
Kim wu: HCT, B, QK
Fulgore: B, HCT, MK
B. Orchid: HCB, F and FP

Mario Kart 64
(Nintendo)

Master the Secret Corner Turbo
This tip will enable you to triple your normal speed when taking corners. It's extremely handy when playing against the CPU as it gives you a great head start of the bends.

When turning into the bend, hold R to start skidding. As soon as the white smoke starts coming off your wheels, quickly move the control stick in the opposite direction to which you're moving. The smoke should turn yellow. As soon as this happens, quickly move the control stick back to its original position. Repeat this until your smoke goes red. As you come out of the corner, release R and enjoy the extra kick of a turbo as you exit the bend.



Mortal Kombat Trilogy
(Midway)

Human Smoke
On the character select screen, select Robot Smoke and press and hold Back, High Punch, High Kick, Block and Run. You must be holding all of these buttons before the match begins.

Four New Endurance Ladders
On the character select screen, highlight Kano and press Down and Start. You'll hear an explosion if the code is entered correctly.

New options menus
This code adds two extra options to the Options menu. These new options will be displayed as Blue and Red question marks and are described below.

To get the extra options, on the Attract Mode screen, quickly press Block, High Kick, Low Kick, Run, Low Punch, High Punch, High Punch, High Punch, Low Punch, Low Punch. When you enter this code correctly, you'll hear the words "Uh-Huh".

Secret Options Menu 1 "More Kombat"
Level Select: On or Off
Throwing: Enabled or Disabled
Unlimited Runs: On or Off
Bloody Kombat: On or Off
Smoke: On or Off
Khameleon: On or Off

Secret Options Menu 2 "Kombat Cheats"
Free Play: On or Off
Fatality Time: On or Off
Collision Boxes: On or Off
One Round Matches: On or Off

Fight Against Khameleon
On the Star Bridge, press Down and Start when you hear "toasty!" You must do this before the face in the bottom right corner disappears.

GO! GO!

TIPS EXTRA

More late-breaking tips for some of the N64's biggest games. This month, there's also the first-ever Readers' Top Ten Tips – if you find something cool in a game be sure to use the coupon and send it in to us.

NEW HIGH SCORE!

After his exhaustive effort with *Wave Race*, Zy has easily become the office champion on Nintendo's watery racer. You can check out all his best race times in his review on page 28.

However, there is one time that stands out for Zy, a time of racing perfection, a time of a jet ski champion. If you can beat this time (displayed below), send us a video or polaroid of your achievement to:

High Score!
N64 Magazine,
30 Monmouth Street,
Bath,
BA1 2BW.



We'll print the best time next month and reward the skillful winner with a fine Super Pad Plus from Spectra Video.

THIS MONTH'S TIME TO BEAT:



Wave Race 64
Sunny Beach Course
Best time 1'07"669
Best lap 0'21"494
Go on, send in your times.

J LEAGUE PERFECT STRIKER
(Konami)

BIG HEAD PLAYERS
To get the scary "big headed" players, enter the following code at the title screen:
Top C, Top C, Bottom C, Bottom C, Left C, Right C, Left C, Right C, B, A, (hold) Z and press Start.



WAYNE GRETZKY'S 3D HOCKEY
(Midway)

MAKE YOUR OWN TEAM
Go to the options screen, hold L and press Bottom C twice. Now press Top C twice, Bottom C twice, Right C twice and Bottom C once. A row of 16 zeros and the word 'SPECIALS' will appear at the bottom of the screen.

Now exit the options menu, and go to 'Team Stats'. Press Top C ten times and two new team names will appear. Use the D-Pad to flip through the team names and once you have found the two teams that you want to change, press A. You can only copy other players to these teams, you will not be able to copy players on these two teams to other teams.

The first team you're going to change will now appear on the left side of the screen, and a roster for one of the other teams in the game will appear on the right. Press B to scroll through the teams on the left until you see the team you want to take a player from. Using the D-pad to highlight a player on each team, press A to change the player on the left to the player on the right. You can replace as many players as you want and even replace all of the players on the left with duplicates. If you have codes entered for any extra players these will also be available for your new teams. Once the your custom team is set the way you like it, press Start!

The second custom team will now appear on the left and can be edited in the same way. When you've finished, press Start to return to the TEAM STATS screen. Your two new teams will now be available in one-player, multi-player and 'Season' mode.

SUPER TEAMS
Go to the Options Screen, hold down L and press Right C, Left C, Left C, Right C, Left C, Left C, Right C, Left C and Left C. When you go to the team selection screen, you should see four 'super' teams: Canada, USA, 99ers and Williams.

CHANGE PLAYERS' ATTRIBUTES
At the options screen hold any one of the C buttons and press R. This brings up 16 zeros at the bottom of the screen which can be used to alter the size and shape of your players. Bottom C controls the first two zeros which effect player head size. Left C changes the next two zeros which effect player size. Top C changes the 5th and 6th zeros which effect player height. Have fun.

Some examples

Code	Player attributes
1100000	Normal players, small heads
0100000	Normal players, giant heads
1010100	Midget players
1101100	Giant players, small heads
0101100	Giant players, giant heads
0001010	Giant players
0110010	Midget players, giant heads
1000000	Normal players, giant heads

TWO-PLAYER PRACTICE MODE
At the main menu, move the joystick on to Practice mode, press A on controller one and hold it. At the same time, press and hold A on player two's controller.

TUROK DINOSAUR HUNTER
(Acclaim)

CHEAT MENU
We printed most of these cheats in our last issue but a few more have cropped-up since then. Enter these codes at the 'Enter Cheats' screen:

DLKTDR	Pen and ink mode (black and white wireframes)
SNFFRR	Disco mode (flashing lights, dancing enemies)
FRTHSTHTTRLSCK	Infinite lives
THBST	Gallery (view, scale and rotate all 3D enemies)
FDTHMGS	Show credits
THSSLKSCL	Spirit mode (invincibility, slow enemies)
CMGTSMMGGTS	All weapons
BLLTSRRFRND	Unlimited ammo
RBNSMTH	Robin's cheat (invincibility, all weapons, unlimited ammo, big head and credits)
GRGCHN	Greg mode (same as Robin's Cheat, except no invincibility)
DNCHN	Dana mode (small enemies)

Once a cheat has been entered, it becomes permanently selectable in the Cheats menu. If a cheat is active when your game is saved, the cheat will also be saved.



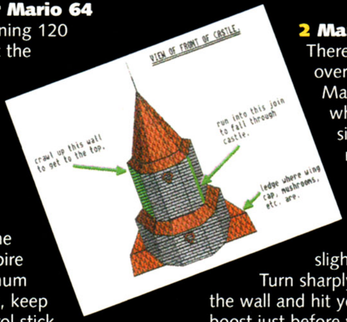
READER'S TOP TEN TIPS



A fantastic response to our first issue coupon, with top tips flooding in from **N64** readers all over the world. Less impressive were the coupons we received with the codes for *Turok* and *Shadows of the Empire* that we, er, printed last issue.

Anyway, the first winner of our readers cheat top ten is Mark Green. So keen was he to make his cheat absolutely crystal clear that he took the time and trouble to do a computer-generated sketch of the Princess's castle in *Mario 64*. Congratulations, sir – it's not a fantastic tip but we like your dedication. A joypad and memory pak are on their way to you. Well done also to everyone else who got a placing in the top ten: exclusive **N64** pin badges are in the post.

1 Super Mario 64



After gaining 120 stars, get the wing cap as usual and then go back to the cannon. Aim at the central spire at maximum elevation, keep the control stick pulled back as you fly and you should land on the brown ledge above where you got the wing cap. You can now do one of two 'cool' things.

Fall through the castle
Above you, the front grey wall has a window on it. Run fast straight into the join where the two walls to the right of this meet (see diagram). If it works, you'll
fall through the wall and into a small gap behind the main doors.

Get to the very top of the castle. Wander around the ledge until you have the two darkest grey walls in front of you. Now crawl up to the right-hand one (see diagram) and then once you're onto the spire you can walk right up to the highest bit of the castle, giving you a lovely view. Great, eh?
Mark Green, Cheltenham

2 Mario Kart

There's a shortcut over the wall on Mario Raceway which can significantly reduce your lap time. After the third turn, veer to the left, and go slightly up the hill.

Turn sharply back towards the wall and hit your Mushroom boost just before you leave the road, jumping at the same time. You'll want to aim just to the right of where the sections of wall intersect.

If you make the jump, you will come down near the giant green pipe. If you manage it for



every lap in Time Trial mode (and do the rest of the course perfectly), you will be able to complete the track in well under one minute.

Please note: this shortcut took me days of practice so don't expect to do it immediately.
Ben McBean, by E-Mail

3 Turok

Run along the walkway above the T-Rex into the box corner. From here, you'll be able to attack without him being able to hit back. It'll take plenty of ammo to finish him off, but it's a lot easier.
Richard Gray, Falkirk



4 Super Mario 64

When you race Koopa the Quick, use the cannon behind you at the start to shoot yourself to the second cannon above. From here, shoot directly to the top. I have achieved a time of 29.4 seconds doing it this way.
Ian Millward by E-Mail

5 Pilotwings

Select Gyrocopter B Class Mission (Little States), take off, find the nearest road and attempt to land on it. When you touch down, don't stop but hold the accelerator point at the orange dot (by holding A and B). Finally, change the view and you have you very own version of *Cruis'n USA*. You can visit all the landmarks and pop in to the nearest petrol station if you run low on fuel.
Tekin Suleyman, London

6 Super Mario 64

On courses 2, 12 and 13, as you walk around, look for butterflies flying from the trees or grass. Punch them as you go past and they'll turn into one-ups or bombs. Nice!
Jordan Stoodley, St Helier

7 Super Mario 64

You can get to the top of the castle without 120 stars. Start a game and go up to the path, take a right and follow the path across the bridge and head for the last tree. Now start to do a triple jump so that the second part of the jump is before the hill starts to go up vertically right in the corner. The last bit of the jump should get you to the top of the hill. From here you can get enough speed up on the slide down to grab the side of the castle wall.

Yoshi isn't on top of the castle but you'll find three extra lives and a flying cap waiting for you.
Robert Stuwart, Cheltenham

8 Super Mario 64

Go to Course Two: Whomp's Fortress and collect the first two stars. Climb the tree next to you when you start for the third and an owl will appear and offer to fly you around the level for as long as his wings hold out.
Stefan Charles, Dorchester



9 Super Mario 64

On course 7 (Fireworld) there's a secret warp near the drawbridge which will take you straight to the eyeball.
Mark Roberts, Bishopwood

10 Annoying Tim

A well aimed elastic band in the side of the head when he's halfway through a *Perfect Striker* championship will elicit the phrase 'spin on this' every time. The trick is to prepare your shot under the desk in advance.
Wil, The N64 Office, Bath

Worst Cheat of the Month

Addams Family (SNES)
Enter the password 1111111 and you'll start off with 100 lives.
Barnaby Martin, Caithness

Yeah, thanks for that Barnaby.

YOUR TOP 10 TIPS

Found an interesting cheat, tip, secret bit or quirky thing to do in one of your games? Then send it to us immediately! Each month we'll compile a top 10 of the best and if you make it in, we'll send you out a rather flash **N64** pin badge. If you get the coverted Number 1 slot we'll send you something just a little bit special. Don't send us stuff we've already printed, though, it makes James cross.

HERE'S MY TOP 10 TIP...

It's for [game name]:

And I've found that if you:

Name ....

Address ....

....

....

....

....

Post code ....

Send to: Tips Extra, **N64** Magazine, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW
If you don't want to cut up your magazine send a photocopy instead, and continue on another bit of paper if you run out of room.



What do you think of N64 Magazine, then? How are you all getting on with your new N64s? What do you reckon to the games? Good grief. No sooner do we ask than you're writing in by the gazillion. Here're the best letters we've been sent this month, along with a couple of the others.

Write to us at:
Club 64, **N64** Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW
Fax: 01225 732275
e-mail: n64@futurenet.co.uk
Any letters printed win a prized N64 Magazine badge!

Letter of the Month gets a 1 Mb memory card, a 55-in-1 keychain, a controller extender and an S-video cable, provided by our pals at Fire and Blaze!



STAR LETTER

"Who was responsible"

Fishing through a pile of Nintendo 64 magazines in the local Menzies I chanced upon your gift-wrapped offering. Instantly noticing the Future Publishing label, I picked it up. My eyes went all glassy as I remembered the good old days of *Super Play*. I looked suspiciously at the rendered Mario on the cover. Carefully I tried to prise open the magazine to get a look at the editorial, to see exactly who was responsible for this new magazine. However, the ridiculous plastic wrapping wasn't helping. Then I spotted the Planet 64 character nestled all on its own in the corner. That distinctive style. It could only have been penned by the Wil Overton of old.

And I'll be damned if it's not just as discerning as the old *SPlay*. Please, we lesser mortals need to know the truth. The more critical you are, the better. I'd rather know the truth and be unhappy than part with £60 and curse all publications associated with officialdom.

Anthony Fletcher, Chester

Fear not. We'll keep our promise to play the best Nintendo 64 games through to the end before awarding them Star Game medals, and to expose crap ones fearlessly. Luckily, though, most of the N64 games we've played so far have been great. **Ed**

"Worth every penny"

Well done, chaps, on an excellent and amusing magazine. It drips with class and colour, but perhaps more importantly it's well-written. There's a perfect balance of text and screenshots, with advertisements kept to a minimum. And the price is low, compared to some of the other magazines, so it's worth every penny.

Yasir Gulzar, Rotherham

Thanks. We're a classy bunch, it's true. We even insist on buying our own tea bags, rather than using the Aramark 3-Star ones that our besuited paymasters provide for us in 1100-packs. **Ed**



"Slashed prices"

Nintendo are really taking the mickey out of Europe with their ludicrous game and console prices. As you said in the first issue, Japan gets it first and have had enough time to implement an AMAZING price cut (£85! Not to mention the games!), the US gets it second and have also slashed prices (£100 and £40-45 games), whereas poor old Europe gets lumped with a £250 price mark and up to £70 for games.

I'm going to be buying an N64 (although I'm bringing one back from America the next time I go – I'm not paying £250!) as the games are superb.

Ashley 'Ashman' Bennett, via e-mail

We wouldn't be surprised to see the N64's UK price dropping pretty soon. Mark our words. **Ed**

"Every other sentence"

Nice new magazine, etc. But one criticism. Every other sentence seems to hail the N64 as the greatest console ever, stating how much better than the PlayStation it is. This seems a bit futile, as anyone buying the magazine probably doesn't need to be convinced of this. It'll just attract the same arguments we've had to endure since "My ZX Spectrum is better than your Commodore 64".

The N64 is obviously technically superior, which leaves the argument purely on the basis of which games you prefer. To be honest, if I had the money I'd probably buy every games console available, as they all have something going for them.

Robbie Lesiuk, Falkirk

PS Is that the same Jonathan Davies I remember from *Your Sinclair*, or am I hallucinating?

Er, hello again. Every other sentence? We've counted, and we can only find other consoles mentioned once. Or maybe twice. **Ed**

"An N64 as well"

I've decided to get an N64. But should I sell my PlayStation? People say the PlayStation is brilliant, with *Wipeout, Formula 1, Tomb Raider* and *Bust-A-Move 2*. Should I keep my PlayStation and get an N64 as well?

Matthew Bullman, Castleford

You're unlikely to get much for your PlayStation, as they're so cheap in the shops now. And there are quite a few good games for it. So if you can afford to, keep it and get an N64 too. That's our advice. **Ed**

"What should I buy?"

On March 1st I bought an N64 with *Mario* and, shortly afterwards, *Pilotwings*. After completing them both in just under a month I'm now looking for something else to add to my games collection. But what do I buy? I'm not paying £70 for *Turok*, however good it is, and I don't want *Star Wars*. I was thinking of *Wave Race*, but that means buying another controller which puts it over £80.

Jack Mitchell, Pontefract

Well, you don't have to have a second controller to play Wave Race, *and it's a great game. So get that, I should. But take it from us: even at £30, a second controller is a vital addition to any N64. How else will you be able to have two-player games of* Mario Kart *in the summer?* **Ed**

So tell me this...

Come on then: have a go. The day you find something we don't know about the Nintendo 64 is the day… er… we feel a bit embarrassed.

1. Is there any chance of Namco converting the exellent *Ridge* or *Rave Racer* over onto the N64?
2. Is it true that Nintendo may add a modem to the 64DD, allowing gamers to use the N64 on the Net?
3. Why is it that N64 games are genrally more more expensive than Saturn and PlayStation releases?
4. Are Datel working on a universal adaptor for the British N64?

J Taylor, Surrey

1. Namco haven't yet announced they'll be developing for the N64 at all, so Ridge or Rave Racer seem like remote and unlikely prospects.
2. It true that they may, although nothing's definite yet.
3. Because carts cost more to manufacture than CDs, basically.
4. Datel aren't doing an adaptor, as they reckon there wouldn't be demand for one. But Fire (01302 751428) are. They're selling it for £14.99, which seems entirely reasonable, although problems have been reported using it with Wave Race. We'll get one in and test it for next month. **Ed**



1. With *Mario Kart 64* coming with a free controller in Japan, and *StarFox* coming with the new Jolt Pak, will these extras be available with the games in the UK?
2. Why isn't *64 Oozumo* likely to come out over here? It looks cool, with fat cartoonie blokes fighting. It sounds like a good game to me.
3. Is there any chance of seeing the cows from *Mario Kart* in their own 3D game, like *Mario*? A good name for it would be *Super Fat Cow*.
4. Do you know anyone who's selling a UK N64 cheap in good condition? Or even giving one away free (but not in a competition)? Or any chance of talking my dad into getting me one for my next birthday?
5. Why are Nintendo having price cuts in Japan and America but not in the UK?
6. Will the 64DD have a built-in modem or some sort of Internet package with it, so people can download new characters and extra levels? I also hear it's coming out in the UK around mid-1998? Is there any news on a confirmed date and price tag?

Rossi, Grimsby

1. You won't get a controller with Mario Kart, that's for sure, and it's unlikely you'll get a Jolt Pak with Starfox. C'est la vie.
2. Sumo wrestling doesn't seem to be viewed as a growth market by UK publishers.
3. An excellent idea, which we'll put to Nintendo next time we see them. The nearest equivalent we've played is Super Skidmarks on the Amiga, SNES and Mega Drive, featuring racing cows.
4. How big's your dad?
5. Because they're a bit, erm, 'mysterious'. The UK price will tumble before long, we'll wager.
6. Nothing's been confirmed about the 64DD's release at all – it's all just rumours at the moment. **Ed**

I've noticed there are a variety of controller packs on sale here in the UK for the N64. I've heard a rumour that the official Pak can only save two game positions. Is this true? The Spook pack apparently has four times the save potential of the official Nintendo Pak. I used to own a PlayStation, and the Sony Memory Card allowed a user to save 15 blocks of data. So how does the N64 Pak work?

Dean Daley, via e-mail



A standard Controller Pak holds 256k of data. But how many save games'll fit into that depends on how much space the game needs for each one. Blast Corps, for example, needs to record the exact state of every building on every level, as well as all your best times on the bonus levels and everything, so one Pak can only hold four Blast Corps positions. Doom 64, on the other hand, only needs to remember your position, your inventory and whether a few monsters are dead or not, so it can cram 16 saves onto a Pak. There are quite a few third-party 1 Mbit packs like Spook's available now, each having four Controller-Pak-sized 'pages' that can be flipped between. There's a bit about them in this month's Planet 64. **Ed**

1. Will there be a battle mode in *Star Fox 64*? (Can't wait for some four-player action!)
2. Doesn't *Zelda* look rather good on the N64? Do you have any more news?
3. How much does an official Controller Pak cost? Is it better to buy a 1 Meg one?
4. What is this *MK RPG* then? N64 release?
5. What about *Mario RPG 64*?
6. Universal adapters?
7. I know that *Super Mario 64 2* is being worked on, but will it be cart/64DD and will it be an add-on/new game? Also, 1/2 player, do you think?

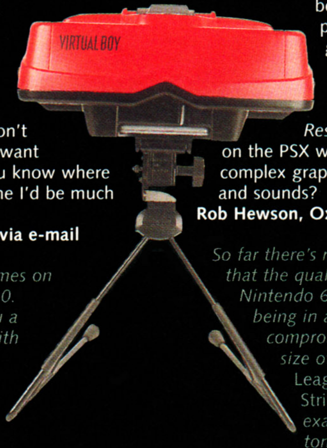


Ashley Bennett, via e-mail

1. Yep. The four-player split-screen mode is for battles only.
2. We printed everything we know at the moment in **N64***/1.*
3. They're £15, making a 1 Meg one, at four times the size and only £5 more, a tempting proposition. Probably the only advantage of the official one is guaranteed reliability.
4. Mortal Kombat Mythology, you mean? It's a N64 game all right, although no release date has been announced yet.
5. It's under way. That's all anyone knows.
6. See a couple of letters ago.
7. Er… again, your guess is as good as ours. There's never been a two-player Super Mario game, though, so that bit seems unlikely. **Ed**

I know that you're an N64 mag, but do you have any idea from where I could get a Virtual Boy nowadays? Don't ask me why I want one, but if you know where I could find one I'd be much obliged.

Barry Whyte, via e-mail



Try Raven Games on 0181 663 6810. They'll do you a Virtual Boy with Tennis for £49.99. **Ed**

1. I have heard from my higher sources that *Tomb Raider 64* is coming out. Is this true? If so, will it have to be shortened because of the lack of space on the cart?
2. Do you think that the 64DD will be a success, or will it end up like the Mega-CD thingy for the Mega Drive?

Tim Peacock, Bath

1. Higher sources? There are no higher sources than **N64** *Magazine. And we can report that, er, we don't know if Tomb Raider's coming out on the N64. Eidos apparently have five N64 games in development, though, one of which is based on an existing game, so Tomb Raider 64 is almost a cert.*
2. Depends entirely on the games. Nintendo seem to have realised this, though, and are planning a series of 64DD-only games that'll you'll have to buy the drive to play. **Ed**

I'm planning to buy an N64 for myself but there are a couple of things that are bothering me. Firstly, because the N64 isn't CD based, will this mean that commentary for footy games and racing games will not be possible? Secondly, will it be able to produce games to the standards of *Tomb Raider* and *Resident Evil* on the PSX with all their complex graphics and sounds?

Rob Hewson, Oxford

So far there's no evidence that the quality of Nintendo 64 games is being in any way compromised by the size of carts. J-League Perfect Striker, for example, has tonnes of commentary – more than would be possible, in fact, if every comment had to be loaded from a CD into the console's own limited memory. And it's only a 64 Meg cart. Tomb Raider and Resident Evil? Well, many would argue that Mario 64 and Turok are miles better already. **Ed**

I'M THE BEST! Your feats of N64 daring

I'm the extremely proud owner of a Nintendo 64. I also own *Super Mario 64* and *Turok Dinosaur Hunter* and I think they're absolutely fantastic! *Mario 64* is marvellous, and my only gripe with it is that it's way too easy. I completed it in under three hours. Honest! I never even used a guide. (Well, maybe once or twice.)

Chris Southam, Burney

A likely story. Ed

Here are my incredible times on *Mario Kart 64's* Luigi Circuit:
Best time 1'46"33
Best lap 34"24
Times obtained racing as Toad.

Hobart Wong, Altrincham

Bah. I can muster only 1'47"49, similarly using Kinopio. How about, though, 2'37"29 on Peach Circuit, again with Kinopio? Eh? How about that? **Ed**

Here are my current fastest times on *Mario Kart 64:* Mario Circuit 1'17"77 (best lap 25"65), Luigi Circuit 01'44"87 (best lap 33"93) using Kinopio to race.

Simon Franklin, Leeds

Even worse. Ed

Here are a couple of my best times in the timed events in *Mario 64*:
Red slide in the princess's bedroom: 0'22"1. Race with Koopa the Quick (1): 0'53"2

Oliver Edwards, Prestwood

Hmm. Not bad. Ed

Have you achieved an incredible feat in a Nintendo 64 game? If so, send the details (along with a photo if you want to dispel all suspicion) to: *I'm The Best!, N64 Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.*

N64 MAGAZINE DIRECTORY

The complete guide to every game we've ever reviewed in N64 Magazine.

How it works

- **The game's name**
- **Its publisher**
- **If it's an import, whether it's a US or Japanese one**
- **A summary of our review**
- **The best tip or cheat, and any issues we've done guides in**
- **The reviewers initials (see below)**
- **Score**
- **The issue we reviewed it in**
- **How much it costs**

Hyper All-Destruction Gorgo 64

Petite Putz Soft | **UK release:** Not a chance | £50 | N64 1 ● 98% ● FB

Although we had high hopes for the game that's taken Japan by storm, *Gorgo* turns out be little more than a Japanese cooking sim! See the raw fish fly and your lives slip away as you desperately try to control Gorgo attempting to de-poison a blowfish while incased in a 30ft mobile suit! The graphics are stunning and the music is the best jazz-rock-funk-punk fusion we've yet heard but we reccomend holding out for the 64DD version.



• Peforming a triple somersault from the green whale should allow you to catch the happy bags before the bonus time elapses. If Ponko turns up, quickly press 'A' five times to tell him to 'naff off'.

N64 reviewers

JA = James Ashton
MH = Marcus Hawkins
WO = Wil Overton
JD = Jonathan Davies
TW = Tim Weaver
ZN = Zy Nicholson

UK Games DIRECTORY

FIFA 64

Electronic Arts £60 | N64 2 ● 39% ● TW

This makes you wonder two things. Firstly, how, with all that advanced technical gubbins at their fingertips, EA managed to produce a worse *FIFA* game than the PlayStation's. And secondly, how, in the wide, wide, world of sport, this passed Nintendo's quality control department. The Albanians execute for lesser offences.



● Remember, you only need tap the shoot button once. The delay is terrible but you *will* eventually produce something. Don't press a second time or your shot will fly over.

SUPER MARIO 64

N64 STAR GAME

Nintendo £60 | N64 1 ● 96% ● ZN

When other developers first caught a glimpse of *SM64*, they went back to the drawing board with their efforts. The game is sublime – taking everything that's made previous *Mario* titles great and fleshing it out into 3D. Mario himself can do just about anything, the levels are huge, packed with incredible ideas and there're loads of secret bits. The world's greatest video game.



● Loads of tips in our review in **N64**/1.
● '20 most-asked questions', Nintendo Hotline pages in **N64**/1, **N64**/2. Guide in **N64**/2.

PILOTWINGS 64

N64 STAR GAME

Nintendo £50 | N64 1 ● 89% ● TW

The first *Pilotwings* split gamers' opinions with its floaty, airbound subject matter. However, this 64-bit refurbishment is likely to have a much wider appeal than the SNES original. Incorporating the sublime talents of flight sim specialists Paradigm and Nintendo's usual playable sheen, *Pilotwings 64* emerges as a supreme example of how to harness the N64's immense potential.



● The four Birdman Stars are situated in the park in New York, inside the Arctic Island's waterfall, in a cave on Crescent Island and on the bridge-shaped rock on Holiday Island.

TUROK DINOSAUR HUNTER

N64 STAR GAME

Acclaim £70 | N64 1 ● 90% ● TW

Replacing *Doom's* cyberdemons with screen-filling dinosaurs, cranking up the violence to ludicrously bloody proportions and adding a series of breathtakingly devastating weapons, Acclaim/Iguana have produced – yes – a monster. A phenomenally good game which really shows the technical gulf that exists between the N64 and the other consoles.



● At the edge of a platform the screen will dip. Jump here to gain maximum distance.
● Full cheat listing Tips Extra **N64**/2.

SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE

Nintendo £55 | N64 1 ● 78% ● JA

10 levels of varying game styles which somehow fails to be more than the sum of its parts. The fantastic snowspeeder and space battles are ultimately let down by some lack-lustre *Doom*-style bits and the truly awful speeder bike on Luke's home planet, Mos Eisley. It still has a great Star Wars feel, though and is loads better than the PC's *Dark Forces*.



● To see the end sequence, enter your name as _Credits (case sensitive). 'Amusing' credits appear with the game difficulty set to 'Jedi'.

WAVE RACE 64

N64 STAR GAME

Nintendo £55 | N64 2 ● 90% ● ZN

Breathtaking water-based racing is the order of the day in Miyamoto's astounding *Wave Race*, with the N64 once again proving its mind-expanding capabilites. Thoroughly realistic water effects, a scintillating two-player speedway and the possibility of trying your hand at Lee-Majors-style stunt work, make this easily as enjoyable as *Mario Kart 64*.



● To achieve the Helicopter stunt and 1700 points, when you're on the ramp, turn sharply in a Left/Up direction and then hold Down to pull off a sideways flip.

Import Games DIRECTORY

BLAST CORPS

N64 STAR GAME

Nintendo | UK release: TBA | N64 2 ● 88% ● JD

Only about once in five years does a completely original game turn up, and *Blast Corps* is that game. It's incredibly good fun, placing you in charge of a fleet of demolition vehicles and compelling you to clear a path for a runaway nuclear missile carrier. Technically it's N64 through and through and, coming from the mysterious Rare, it's British too. The only snag: it doesn't take long to see all of it.



● Try parking your vehicle against a building in such a fashion that the bloke can't get out, and then hold Z. After a second or two the building'll explode.

CRUIS'N USA

Midway | UK release: TBA | N64 1 ● 34% ● JD

Undoubtedly an accurate conversion of the coin-op. But that, while worth popping the occasional 50p into, is hardly Earth-shattering stuff. Racing across the USA isn't all that tough, even with the irritatingly over-sensitive controls. The music is awful, and the graphics, while functional, use only a fraction of the N64's power. Better racing games will appear.



● At the track selection screen and hold down Left C, Bottom C and L for Golden Gate Park, top C, right C and L for Indiana, or Right C, Bottom C and L for San Francisco.

DORAEMON

Epoch | UK release: Unlikely | N64 2 ● 60% ● TW

Just as its predecessors tried and failed to turn *Mario* into a blue atomic cat, so too does the latest *Doraemon* game try to bring a touch of feline magic to a *Mario 64*-like universe. Sadly, things turn out to be slightly linear, slightly confusing and all-too-tedious. Perhaps more suited to your younger brother or sister.



• Once you've beaten the missile in the car chase, race him again and beat him for a secret prize. Do it again and you'll win yourself a green crystal.

THE GLORY OF ST ANDREWS

Seta | UK release: Unlikely | N64 1 ● 58% ● TW

The N64's first golf game lacks any redeeming features. A ropey graphical engine – inducing a certain sense of 16-bit déjà vû – and an only partially successful use of the analogue stick as a virtual club. A hugely disappointing golfing debut.



● Use the Player Configuration screen to customise your player's clubs for the course you're about to play.

HUMAN GRAND PRIX

Human | UK release: Winter 1997 | N64 2 ● 70% ● TW

Although never coming up to the standards of the PlayStation's *Formula 1* – inexcusable, really when you consider the extra power available to the programmers – *Human Grand Prix* provides a throughly entertaining bash at F1 driving with beautiful handling and a plethora of options. Shame about the horrendous pop-up, though.



● To benefit fully at corners, don't use the brake, just stab at the accelerator.
● For an example of a course layout, read our review in **N64**/2.

J-LEAGUE PERFECT STRIKER

N64 STAR GAME

Konami | UK release: June (as *ISS64*) | N64 1 ● 89% ● TW

Konami prove their footballing dominance with a magical footballing sim, combining breathtaking animation, a plethora of fantastic moves and some outrageous goals. *Perfect Striker* is as close to The Beautiful Game as any computer game has ever come. In June it becomes *ISS64* for its UK release. Goal Lazo, as some would, no doubt, moot.



● Learn how to use the 'kick-ahead-and-run' button (Bottom C) both for attacking and catching opposing players.

KILLER INSTINCT GOLD

Nintendo | UK release: May | N64 1 ● 62% ● ZN

The *KI2* coin-op met with great success, and this is a perfect conversion of it. But *KI Gold* is a game from a previous era of beat-'em-ups, with its 2D characters, and it suffers from an over-reliance on pulling off fancy combos. Wait for a better fighter. (See 'Saturday Fight Fever' a full preview of all the N64's up-and-coming beat-'em-ups in **N64**/2.)



● End any combo with HCB, F+QK as a finisher. This should pull off Maya's enormous Mamouth Fatality.

KING OF PRO BASEBALL

Imagineer | UK release: Unlikely | N64 1 ● 68% ● TW

The players are super-deformed and cute, and this initially proves tremendously entertaining. If you can fathom the copious Japanese menus, that is. Eventually, though, the too slow runners and the super-skillful CPU opposition will begin to get you down.



● Create duplicates of star players by entering 0000 as your PIN, and then type in your name as the name of the player. (Try his first name, or first name + initial of surname.)

MAH JONG MASTER

Konami | UK release: Unlikely | N64 1 ● 69% ● WO

If you've never played mah jong, this would be a very tough way to learn, with its copious Japanese text. If you have, though, it's a jolly good rendition, with a selection of computer personalities to play against and some weird Japlish intro screens.



● If you have a melded triplet, says Wil, and draw the fourth from the wall, you may declare 'kong' and add it to your triplet to make a melded four.

GO! GO!

MARIO KART 64

Nintendo | UK release: June | N64 1 ● 91% ● JD

Mario Kart 64 had a lot to live up to, what with the SNES's *Super Mario Kart* being one of Nintendo's all-time most-loved games. But, bless it, it just about pulls it off, with a whole new world of 3D courses and more complex and subtle kart handling. A variety of modes means it never gets boring, and the four-player split-screen mode is rivetting. A vital purchase.



● Press and hold the accelerator button just as the blue start light comes on. This should give you a turbo-start.

MORTAL KOMBAT TRILOGY

Midway | UK release: TBA | N64 1 ● 34% ● MH

We're bored of *Mortal Kombat* now, given that it's barely changed over the years and has long-since been superseded by the likes of *Tekken* and *Virtua Fighter*. And it has to be said, this N64 conversion is the final straw. The sound, for one thing, is awful and the animation is, unbelievably, worse than the PlayStation's. Please leave this game alone.



● For unlimited credits, press D, D, U, U, R, R, L, L on the story screen. When you next lose a battle you'll find you're in Freeplay.

NBA HANGTIME

Midway | UK release: TBA | N64 1 ● 52% ● JD

Technically, an excellent continuation of the NBA Jam series, with huge (albeit 2D players), great animation and sheaves of special moves and secrets. It is, however, basketball at the end of the day, and thus consists of running backwards and forwards, endlessly scoring baskets. Until you fall asleep. We'd rather play a decent football game.



● Create duplicates of star players by entering 0000 as your PIN, and then type in your name as the name of the player. (Try his first name, or first name + initial of surname.)

WAYNE GRETZKY'S 3D HOCKEY

Midway | UK release: TBA | N64 1 ● 70% ● JD

Ice hockey arcade-style, with violent collisions, an absurdly fast-moving puck and excellent 3D graphics. Wide-ranging options allow you to play anything from rules-free 3-a-side in a reduced rink, to a proper five-a-side simulation with infractions a-plenty. There's not a great deal of subtlety here, but the four-player game is tremendous.



● On the options screen, hold a C button and press R. 16 zeroes will appear at the bottom of the screen. Alter these using the C buttons to change your players' appearances.

WONDER PROJECT J2

Enix | UK release: Unlikely | N64 1 ● 55% ● WO

You'll have to be either Japanese-speaking or very 'special' to be able to get to grips with this weird adventure. And when you do it's not all that great. You've got to guide a robotic girl through various 'life' situations with the overall aim of helping her realise her dream of becoming a real person. Which is, you know, nice.



● If Josette flies into a temper and won't co-operate, try winning her back with a 3D pudding. (Er, according to Wil.)

NUMBERS

Games released officially in the UK (ones given English text and optimised for Britain's PAL television system) are either distributed through THE (Nintendo's representative in the Britain) or another games publisher with a base in this country. It's not necessarily the game's developer or original publishers who release the game here. For instance, the Japanese publisher Imagineer have a lot of their games distributed by Ocean in the UK.

Below is a list of all the UK publishing companies who have either released games for Nintendo systems in the past or who have N64 titles definitely in the pipeline. There's a contact number next to each.

Acclaim	(0171) 344 5000	**Infogrames**	(0171) 738 8199
BMG	(0171) 973 0011	**Interplay**	(01628) 423666
Bullfrog	(0148) 357 9399	**JVC**	(0171) 240 3121
Codemasters	(01926) 814132	**Konami**	(0189) 585 3000
Core	(01332) 297797	**Ocean**	(0161) 832 6633
Eidos	(0121) 625 3366	**Psygnosis**	(0151) 28 3000
Electronic Arts	(01753) 549442	**Telstar**	(01932) 222232
Fox Interactive	(0171) 878 3000	**THE Games**	(01703) 653377
Gametek	(01753) 854444	**THQ**	(01372) 745 222
Gremlin	(01142) 753423	**Titus**	(0171) 700 2119
GT Interactive	(0171) 258 3791	**UBISoft**	(0181) 941 4004
HudsonSoft	(0181) 536 1153	**Virgin**	(0171) 368 2255

Web site of the month

n64.com
www.n64.com



Run by our own US correspondent, Doug Perry, n64.com is an off-shoot of Imagine Publishing, producers of the US magazines *Next Generation* and *Game Players*. It's updated daily with news (assisted by Imagine's regular contact with 'the industry'), has a huge archive of N64-related material, and badgers Nintendo's American concern with commendable verve.

Rumour, tall tales and plain lies abound in the murky world of the Internet. But, if you've got the technology, you might also find some interesting N64 gems on a couple of these web sites.

NINTENDO-RELATED AND UNOFFICIAL SITES

Nintendo Power	www.nintendo.com/
Nintendo Japan	www.nintendo.co.jp/
Next Generation	www.next generation.com/
Game Japan (A weekly Net magazine)	www.rcp.co.jp/recca/
n64.com	www.n64.com/
N64 Headquarters	www.n64hq.com/
Nintendojo	members.aol.com/
N64 Gazetta (UK site)	www.websling.demon.co.uk/
Nintendo 64 Power	www.n64power.com/
Die Hard Game Fan	www.gamefan.com/
Hype (multi-format site)	www.hype.se

GAME COMPANY SITES

Activision	www.activision.com/
3D Realms	www.apogee1.com/
Argonaut	www.argonaut.com/
ASCII	www.asciient.com/
Atlus	www.atlus.com/
Bethesda	www.bethsoft.com/
Blizzard	www.blizzard.com/
Boss	www.bossgame.com/
Capcom	www.capcoment.com/
Crystal Dynamics	www.crystald.com/
Data East	www.dataeast.com/
Eidos	www.eidosinteractive.com/
Electronic Arts	www.ea.com/
Enix	www.marinet.or.jp/com/enix/
Epic Megagames	www.epicgames.com/
Gametek	www.gametek.com/
Graphics School	http://204.174.42.103
GT Interactive	www.gtinteractive.com/
GTE	www.im.gte.com/
Hudson	www.hudson.co.jp/
Human	www.human.co.jp/
Interplay	www.interplay.com/
Konami Japan	www.konami.co.jp/
Konami US	www.konami.com/
LucasArts	www.lucasarts.com/
MicroProse	www.microprose.com/
Midway	www.midway.com/
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Classic Game & Watches courtesy of Jason Moore at Retrogames (0181 203 8868)



From their humble beginnings producing 'hanafuda' playing cards, to success with the Game & Watch, to engineering a world-beating 64-bit powerhouse, Nintendo have been delivering video gaming nirvana for over 15 years. And in the face of continued competition from Sega and a relatively fresh – but nonetheless fearsome – assault from Sony, they've kept the number-one slot. How do they do it? Who are the people there that make it happen? And just what is it that Nintendo does that, however hard they try, their competitors can't? The answers lie on the pages that follow...

FROM CARDS TO CARTS

Inside Nintendo's game heads

People don't say 'vacuum cleaner' these days – they say 'hoover'. And, increasingly, people don't say 'video game' either – they say 'Nintendo'. (And 'biro'. See?) The gravity of Nintendo's influence over the world was summed up recently when Liverpool FC's goalie David James confessed that his poor match performances could be put down to "eight hours of Nintendo last night". Millions like him have experienced 'the Nintendo effect'...

But this situation would surely have seemed inconceivable during the company's formative years. Unlike contemporaries such as Sega, you see, Nintendo hasn't always been involved in the phenomenon that video gaming represents.

In fact, video games are far removed from the product which set Nintendo off on its path to fortune and glory. Formed by Fusajiro Yamauchi in 1889, Nintendo started out selling hand-made playing cards and, for nearly 100 years, the company's high-quality card products remained its core business.

Nintendo's progress since those far-off days has been astonishing, and to understand how the company got where it is today, we must consider its remarkable history.

Having seen his company conquer the playing-cards market, Nintendo Company Ltd's (NCL's) president, Hiroshi Yamauchi (who took control when his grandfather, Fusajiro, suffered a stroke in 1949), decided it was time to diversify in order to

GO! GO!

Nintendo's five greatest successes

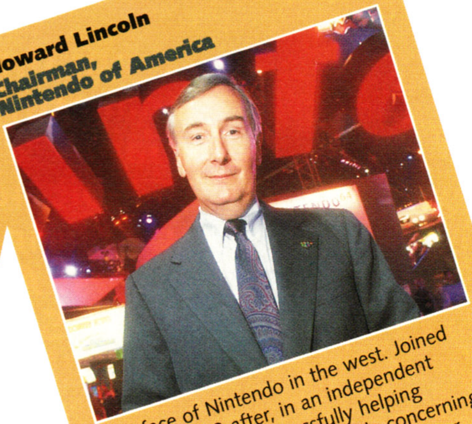
1 The Nintendo 64
Though its development was enveloped with doubt, the N64 introduced a revolutionary 3D experience when it finally appeared last year.
2 The NES
At a time when everyone thought the console scene was irrecoverable, Nintendo's 8-bit machine singlehandedly revived it.
3 The Super NES
This 16-bit format – 'the' console to own during the early '90s – plays host to more classic games than any other system to date.
4 The Game Boy
A typical Nintendo product: innovative and affordable. Brought video games into the wide-scale public eye with a topper version of *Tetris*.
5 Mario
Like Pac-Man or a Space Invader, Mario has become a videogaming icon. And, remarkably, he still looks as fresh today as he did in 1981.

Hiroshi Yamauchi
President, Nintendo Co Ltd



The big cheese. Joined NCL in 1949 when his grandfather, the company's former president, suffered ill-health. Legendary business acumen. Known to get a bit angry. Not to be trifled with, generally speaking.

Howard Lincoln
Chairman, Nintendo of America



The face of Nintendo in the west. Joined NOA in 1982 after, in an independent lawyer capacity, successfully helping Nintendo to win a court battle concerning *Donkey Kong*. Highly skilled negotiator.

Inside Nintendo's game



expand. However, three brave new projects – a brand of instant rice, a (ahem) 'love hotel' and a taxi business – failed to take the company in the fresh (and profitable) direction he so hankered after.

So, realising that one of Nintendo's strengths was its powerful distribution network – which was pushing Nintendo playing cards into as many outlets across Japan as was conceivably possible – Yamauchi decided to concentrate on devising more strictly entertainment-based concepts which could be sold down these avenues. Enter Gumpei Yokoi, in 1969, as head of Nintendo's newly formed 'Games' division. Having been pulled from maintaining the playing-card assembly lines at NCL, though, Yokoi wasn't sure what was being asked of him. "What should I make?" he understandably queried at the time. "Something great," came Yamauchi's reply.

This he did, creating a range of products, including the Ultra Hand (a novelty extendible pincer-like contraption), The Ultra Machine (an indoor baseball-pitching unit) and the Love Tester (which young couples supposedly used to measure the 'love' that existed between them), all of which performed well for Nintendo, giving it the impetus to break free from the constraints of the playing-card market and move into more exciting areas.

Along with Yokoi, two individuals, Masayuki Uemura and Genyo Takedo, were the driving forces behind Nintendo's full-scale entry into the world of electronic entertainment hardware. Uemura, an ex-Sharp engineer, and Takedo, who responded to a Nintendo job advertisement asking for a toy designer, worked under Yokoi's supervision in creating the Nintendo Beam Gun, hardware which was put to successful use in both home and arcade set-ups in the late '70s. The company was well on its way to becoming one of Japan's leading entertainment companies.

SOPHISTICATED

In the late '70s, Nintendo teamed up with electronics giant Mitsubushi to create its first home consoles: the Color TV Game 6 (which played six different versions of *Pong*), the Color TV Game 15 (offering – yes – 15 different versions of *Pong*) and a number of slightly more sophisticated systems offering crude driving and *Breakout*-style gaming challenges.

The pocket calculator market came to fruition in the early '80s, and Yokoi's team made use of the possibilites afforded by such cheap, flexible technology in launching in 1981 the Game & Watch series, which, with a range of nearly 50 titles (notable ones including multi-screen games like *Donkey Kong* and its sequel), went on to sell millions of units across the globe.

But, with the likes of Taito's *Space Invaders* having kicked off the arcade boom in such memorable fashion in 1978, it was the coin-op scene that had really attracted Yamauchi's interest by this point, and he set his engineers to work on titles that would give Nintendo a slice of the action. The coin-ops they came up with – including now-obscure titles such as *Sky Skipper*, *Radarscope* and *Sheriff* – went on to perform profitably, if not spectacularly well.

It was a team led by Uemura that created the product which made Nintendo. The success of their 8-bit Famicom (aka Nintendo Entertainment System – or NES – in the West) console is now the stuff of legend: 500,000 units sold in the first two months. It hit retail in Japan in '83, and went on to sell "as fast as it could be made". Software support from the world's foremost developers at the time, including Namco, Konami and Capcom, ensured that the machine made a similar mark in Europe and, especially, the US. (By 1990, an NES could be found in one third of all American homes.) In the early '90s, Nintendo took in as much cash as every American movie studio combined, and profitted more than any of them (and more than the three US television networks combined). Such an unprecendented performance shocked everyone – including Nintendo themselves.

But, when attempting to pinpoint the genesis of Nintendo's all-conquering success, many cite the arrival of fresh new blood at Nintendo rather than a box of plastic and silicon chips. This blood occupied the veins of Shigeru Miyamoto, an artist who joined Nintendo in 1977 and was working in Nintendo's planning department when he was approached by Yamauchi in 1980. The Nintendo president wanted a new video game. Miyamoto had enjoyed video games since he was in college, and was super-keen to take up the challenge. A new era dawned.

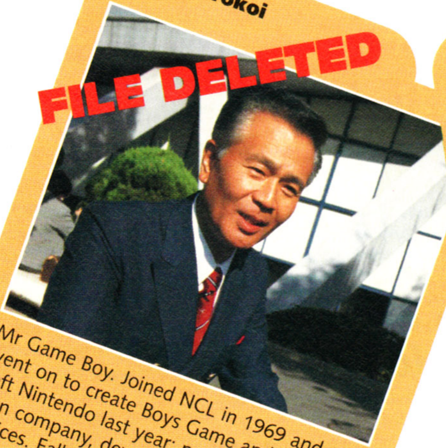
What frustrated Miyamoto about the games of the time was their basic nature – he dismissed shoot-'em-ups and *Pong*-style games as being limited, wondering why video games were not treated more like books or movies. It was with such story-telling ideals that he went on to create *Donkey Kong* in 1981. The fact that the game eschewed the coin-op themes popular at the time frankly appalled some Nintendo staff, yet the game that introduced Mario to the world swiftly proved to be a whopping success.

UNBLINKERED

When over 60,000 *Donkey Kong* coin-ops sold when it launched in the US, the company realised that it could become as big a name in the west as it had become in its home territory. And all because of Miyamoto's fresh, unblinkered approach.

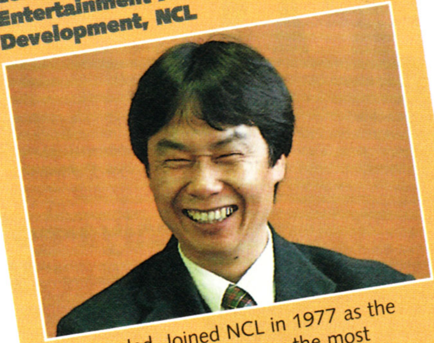
Following a spell working on coin-ops (most famously the original

Gumpei Yokoi



Mr Game Boy. Joined NCL in 1969 and went on to create Boys Game and Virtual. Left Nintendo last year; now operates his own company, developing new-fangled devices. Fallen genius.

Shigeru Miyamoto
General manager, Entertainment Analysis & Development, NCL



Mario's dad. Joined NCL in 1977 as the company's first artist. Now the most respected game designer in the world, following a rude amount of successful titles. The da Vinci of videogames.

Nintendo's five biggest failures

1 The Virtual Boy
Nintendo had high hopes for the Veebee, but a shortage of decent games and headache-inducing red-and-black visuals killed it.
2 R.O.B.
The 'Robotic Operating Buddy' was a peripheral for the NES which was about as much fun as playing with a rabid Doberman Pincher.
3 The Power Glove
The high point of The Power Glove's life was an appearance in the Fred 'The Wonder Years' Savage movie, The Wiz. Enough said.
4 The Disk System
Nintendo released this NES floppy-disk add-on only in Japan, where a lack of consumer interest ensured its swift demise.
5 The Zapper
In the mid-'80s, both Nintendo and Sega believed that light-gun accessories like this would be the next big thing. WRONG.



game heads

heads

Mario Bros. in 1983) and several Game & Watch titles, Miyamoto moved on to designing Famicom software in 1984. His first creation, *Super Mario Bros.*, was the game that sold the NES in the west, and set him on a glittering career path that includes work on such classics as *Super Mario World*, *Stunt Race FX*, *Star Fox*, *Yoshi's Island* and, of course, *Super Mario 64*.

Nintendo needed the Miyamoto touch more than ever when the launch of Sega's Mega Drive in 1989 signalled a threat to the market that Nintendo had made its own. The hunger for new technology that is among a video gamer's inherent traits ensured that the Mega Drive was a huge success in the West, and left Nintendo playing catch-up. This they eventually did, thanks to superior hardware in the form of the SNES and, more importantly, some landmark games from Miyamoto and his talented software technician colleagues at NCL.

Nintendo were last to the party again with the next wave of hardware in the form of the N64. Sega and Sony had stolen an 18-month march on Nintendo with their 32-bit machines, and Sony has repeated Sega's feat in wresting control away from Yamauchi's company for the time being. Sony has achieved this partly by scooping up a wave of customers – the twentysomethings – that would traditionally fall outside Nintendo's 'catchment area'. Nintendo's dependence on 'younger viewers' has been viewed by some as a failing, but their increasing awareness of the more mature gaming sector – proved by the release of games such as *Turok* and *Doom* – show that they're willing to take Sony on on their terms (if not so comprehensively equipped to do it right now).

Nintendo's success can't be attributed to one specific factor. Instead, the company has made it big – and remained big – thanks to a combination of elements. The guiding principles of Yamauchi are one particularly important influence: this is a man whose decisions – often made seemingly on instinct alone – have pushed Nintendo in the right directions at the right times. Then there are the hardware gurus who have put together the NES, the Game Boy, the SNES and, with the cooperation of SGI, the Nintendo 64 – no other console manufacturer has such a consistent track record. The third most important part is the company's in-house sofware production facility. Led by the examples born of Miyamoto, NCL's coders, graphic artists and sound engineers are without doubt the world's most talented.

PUNCH

The company's success is self-perpetuating to some degree, too: when the world's leading computer-image-generation company, Silicon Graphics, managed to scale down its graphics-processing punch to a point where it was economical for use in home video game systems, whose reputation was it courted by when choosing a partner? Exactly.

The resultant technology, the reason why you're holding this magazine today, is but another step in the exciting development of a company whose continued performance appears unquashable. With Sega already failing fast and Sony's machine playing host to an ever-broadening selection of dire games, it looks like Nintendo are going to have an easy ride in the coming years.



Nintendo through the years

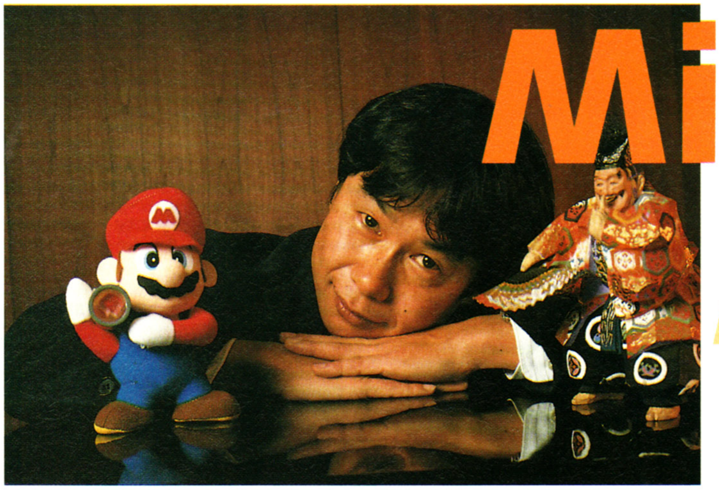
1889
● Nintendo Koppai is founded by Fusajiro Yamauchi to manufacture the cards used in an almost-certainly confusing game called hanafuda. 'Nintendo' means 'Work hard, but in the end it is in heaven's hands'.

1970
● Finding the playing cards business uncomfortably limiting, Nintendo branches out into toys and launches the Ultra Hand, a telescopic grabbing arm. 1.2 million are sold.

1972
● Atari's *Pong*, the first video game, appears in American bars and clubs.

1977
● Under its new president, Hiroshi Yamauchi, Fusajiro's grandson, Nintendo launches the Color TV Game 6, a machine which connects to the television and plays *Pong*-style games.

GO! GO!



Miyamoto

Think 'Father of Video Games' and Nolan Bushnell, the creator of Atari's *Pong,* comes to mind. Think 'Father of the Modern Video Game', however, and there's another quite different name to consider: Shigeru Miyamoto.

This man's overwhelmingly enduring talent has made its mark on games dating back to 1981, in the form of *Donkey Kong,* to modern-day productions, including that which many have hailed as the greatest of all time: *Super Mario 64.*

Although he takes a more back-seat role today than he did when sketching out the initial designs for Mario's sprite in 1981, Miyamoto retains an understanding of the art of video game design that sets him apart from the thousands of contemporaries who so often attempt to emulate his glorious creations.

A modest, demure man, he has a light-hearted demeanour which belies his stature as the most influential person working in videogames. Now in his early forties, he prefers to travel to NCL's Kyoto HQ by mountain bike rather than motor car. Outside video game design and production, he cites swimming and playing the acoustic guitar among his hobbies. His favourite movie is Raiders of the Lost Ark, and its producer, George Lucas, is his idol. And, if ever there was a comparison itching to be drawn, it has to be between these two individuals' contributions to their respective trades…

Miyamoto on… Cartridges

I think we've completed enough software to prove that cartridges are a viable and important medium. But unfortunately most Japanese users don't see it that way – they see CD-ROMs as a current trend and they feel that cartridges are in some way obsolete. But when it comes to software content, we've proved there's still life left in cartridges – we just haven't managed to persuade a lot of the Japanese consumers yet!

Miyamoto on… N64 Game Music

Many people want to have high-quality music, say with a full orchestra sound or something. But what I'm saying to our sound staff is they shouldn't be too concerned about the quantity of the music data. Rather than concentrating on increasing the quantity of music in a game, we should try to make the most of its quality. Without CD, musicians may be disappointed with the quantity and range of data that they can use, but over time I think they'll learn to appreciate that less can be more. They should brush up their skills in producing interactive music, and eventually technology will allow this type of sound composition to match today's prerecorded music.

Miyamoto on… *Super Mario 64*

I think the point we were basically focusing on with Super Mario 64 *– and this may or may not be a lesson to others – is that in the past, 3D games have been developed selfishly by their creators. We approached* Super Mario 64 *from the other direction, and tried to cater to the selfishness of the end users and their desire for control, a good game camera, and ease of play. This wasn't a lesson for us, because we've known that this was the best way to do it since we first started experimenting with 3D using the FX chip for the Super NES. So the* Super Mario 64 *project was more of a reminder to us, and it reconfirmed that, as with all games, you have to cater to the user's desires.*

Also, we learned a lot while making Super Mario 64 *about the potential of the Nintendo 64 hardware itself. And while making the game, I discovered many points about the game's 3D engine that could be modified or improved. We didn't have time to implement these changes during* Super Mario 64, *but now, as we work on the next games – Zelda, for example – we can complete a tune-up of the* Super Mario 64 *system, and games like* F-Zero *can be completely new.*

Miyamoto on… The N64's Joypad

I think it's easy to get accustomed to the analogue pad, and most people manage to master it after about two hours' playing time. But, of course, it's another question altogether as to whether or not gamers will accept it in the long term. When we first introduced the 8-bit Famicom into Japan in the 1980s, everyone was accustomed to using a joystick, and many people complained about the new joypad. They got used to it, though.

Miyamoto on… His Role at Nintendo

There are mainly three parts to my job right now. First, there's my normal job which is as a game producer working closely with the game directors of four or five different games. But this is always the case with me – I always seem to be working on four of five games at any one time. Second, I work with producers working for other companies – so I'm supervising the development of around ten games at third-parties. Third, I'm involved with disc-based games – a little less than ten right now. These projects include the system construction for Mario Paint, *editing* Sim City *– and other similar titles – and, as I said earlier, I'm working on the basic structure of self-growing games. This new project will be due for release sometime in 1998, and it'll be unique, original and different. But because of that uniqueness, most people who see it are criticising it, saying, "This is not a game!" So I'm kind of in trouble right now, whether what I'm doing is right or not.*

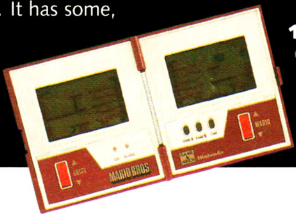
Miyamoto on… *Yoshi's Island 64*

When we started software development for Nintendo 64, we

- Shigeru Miyamoto joins Nintendo.

1979
- Nintendo tries its hand at competing with American coin-op machines, with *Hellfire, Sherrif, Sky Skipper* and *Radarscope.* It has some, though not much, success.

1981
- The *Donkey Kong* coin-op, designed by Miyamoto, appears. It features a carpenter called Mario.
- The first of Nintendo's Game & Watches are launched. They're games. They're watches. They're games and watches. Etc.



1983
- The Famicom, known outside Japan as the Nintendo Entertainment System, is launched. More powerful than any competing machine, and, at $100, cheaper too, it quickly captures the market, selling by the million and pushing out all rival systems.

1984
- The first of Miamoto's NES Mario games, *Super Mario Bros.*, appears. It stars Mario – now a plumber – and his slimmer brother, Luigi. The series later goes on to sell over 60 million copies.

1985
- The Famicom is launched in the US, renamed



moto on...

wanted to make a kind of 'two-and-a-half dimensional' game, because this would be easier for the consumers to start playing with. Eventually we decided that this game would be Yoshi's Island 64.

The original Yoshi's Island for the Super NES used the FX chip, because we wanted to do all sorts of things with the game, but, still, there were many things we just couldn't do because of the limitations of the old hardware. So we really want to introduce these features – and realise our original concept – in a finished version of Yoshi's Island for Nintendo 64.

3D graphics are fine, but for Yoshi's Island we want to have more artistic graphics, so that the game is more like a moving picture, or something like that. And this means doing it in 2D. Polygons offer a kind of 'solid' graphics, and if you like it that's all right, but texture-mapped graphics are always limited to set ways, and they will always look similar.

However, when it comes to 2D graphics, there's a variety of ways in which you can paint the original pictures that are used in the game. You could use an airbrush, you could use a pencil, you could use chalk, or many other ways; you can paint the pictures in any way you like.

As you can see in Yoshi's Island 64, we've used what we call 'cardboard art' – and it's only with a 2D game that we can have this kind of rich expression in the graphics.

Miyamoto on... 3D Games

When Space Invaders was written, nobody at that time was able to imagine what the actual technology was capable of, or where it would go – they would have been very surprised. Games became more and more complex, and the consequence was that lots of games appeared that were very different. And 3D gives games even more complexity, so essentially it's just about making games wider in scope. From a 2D game as a basis it's possible to make a 3D game by adding some new points made possible by 3D. Personally, I'm very interested in making some new 3D titles based on old 2D ones. The additional complexity offered by 3D gives more possibilities to creators and that in turn is good for players.

Miyamoto on... How He Does It

I think about what a player would like to play. I try to make a game from the player's point of view and imagine what kind of character they would like to be. Then I move onto building up the game, adding a scenario, deciding on a setting, the characters and the events that will take place. So, I try to meet the customer's wishes first. I haven't had much experience in developing RPGs, but it's very important for that type of game in particular.

Miyamoto on... What Makes a Good Game

To make a game you must put in a lot of effort. I'll put my neck out and say that PlayStation games sound good, but when you watch them in action they're not finished at all in my opinion. A game is finished when a creator decides it is. There are lots of games developed for Nintendo that have to be refused release because they're not finished. When you're making a game, the creator mustn't allow it to be released because he is satisfied – he must always think about the player's feelings and wishes. Self-satisfaction isn't conducive to creativity. I think European painters – like the impressionist Cezanne, for example – were always thinking about how to surprise the customer – to impress them in a gallery. It's very important.

Miyamoto on... His Favourite Games

I don't actually play many games. I like to play around with them, but I don't really spend much time doing it. If you want to play role-playing games you have to play for at least five hours to enjoy them, and I don't go for that kind of obligation. I like things like Tetris, for example, which are enjoyable in a shorter period of time. Outside of my own productions, my favourite videogame is maybe Pac Man.

Miyamoto on... Nintendo's Competition

Unfortunately, our competitors seem simply to try to imitate the surface and just end up making very badly balanced games. They never understand why and how we've done what we've done to achieve each game's content.

I think Sega is trying to imitate Nintendo's way of business, but it makes some modifications. Perhaps Sega's particular strengths are its arcade business and its capacity to produce new hardware. Nintendo's strategy is different from Sega's – Nintendo gets involved in research and development and markets the results of its research. Sega proceeds in another way – it imitates Nintendo and tries to produce research and development on products that Nintendo is going to sell. It researches only the products that it knows it wants to sell. The results are the same for both companies but Sega is always thinking in terms of the market.



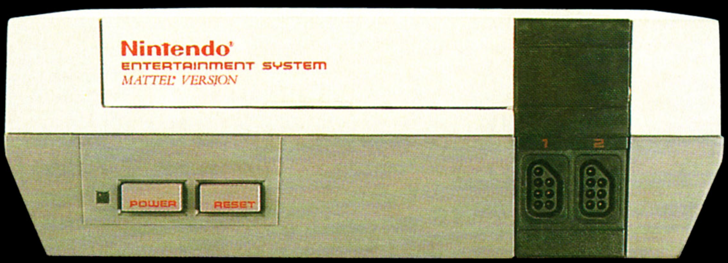
Miyamoto on... Foreign Developers

I like the British way of working very much. I've worked a few times with British developers and everything was perfect. I'm a little worried about the American way of working, because in America I worked from more of a business position, whereas in Britain I worked with development teams. I say that I like the British approach because they work the same way as me. I don't know exactly about America...

But like the Japanese, American producers – movie producers, for example – need to be involved very deeply in their work; they put in a lot of effort and sometimes there's nothing left for a private life. I'm sure Americans work efficiently, but sometimes when I work with them they're careless. I prefer working with the British because their way is more Japanese.

the Nintendo Entertainment System.

1986
- The NES Disk System is launched in Japan. It meets with moderate success, but isn't sold overseas.



1988
- *Super Mario Bros 2* is released for the blossoming NES.

1989
- *Super Mario Bros 3* is released for the NES. This is, by a long way, the hugest and best Mario game yet, and with it Nintendo really hits the big time in America.
- The Game Boy is launched. It swiftly sells millions around the world, propelled to success by



GO! GO!



Yes, we know this is from *SMB3* (and the *All-Stars* version at that).

Case Study 1 Super Mario Bros. (NES – 1984)

One of the most influential games in history, *SMB* was the platform game which properly explored the concept of secrets. Fellow *SMB* players would share tactics and knowledge, but could rarely feel that they had truly unearthed all the game's hidden delights. This was the game that laid the template for Mario's world, introducing characters that went on to appear, in refined forms, in almost every Mazza game since. The variety of gameplay on offer here – Mario could run and swim, appear large or small, kill enemies by jumping on their heads or, by collecting a fire flower, pop them with mini fireballs – was its core strength.



Case Study 2 Super Mario World (SNES – 1990)

The performance of Nintendo's revolutionary 16-bit technology was matched by this, the first game to run on it. Still the best 2D platform game available, despite being nearly seven years old, *SMW* absolutely *compelled* players to uncover its every aspect. (If you've not owned a copy of *SMW* with '97' – denoting your conquer of its 96 levels – next to your save point, you simply haven't lived.) Not a game to blow anyone away in visuals terms, *SMW* is one of the best examples of gameplay being at least 50 times as important as graphics. Sega's counter-title, *Sonic the Hedgehog*, looks puddle-shallow by comparison.

Just what makes Ninte

So Nintendo have produced most of the world's successful games consoles. But they also happen to have created the most popular games to run on them, most notably the *Mario* and *Zelda* series, which have swollen Nintendo's coffers to the tune of millions of pounds.

To give all the credit for Nintendo's software success to Mario's pop Shigeru Miyamoto is to miss the point, though: while Mario's father was undoubtedly responsible for kickstarting the company's boom period with *Donkey Kong,* he has been working with teams consisting of planners, artists, animators, programmers and sound technicians who rank among the most talented in their field.

To appreciate their game design success, a number of fundamental aspects must be considered:

CHARACTER

Character may not seem like an important issue until you consider that more American kids recognise Mario than they do Mickey Mouse, such is the reputation Nintendo's ubiquitous hero has garnered since his moustachioed fizzog first popped up in *Donkey Kong* 16 years ago (and appearing in no less than 46 games since, Mazza-spotting fans).

Consider the demise of Sonic – once such a hip young spunkster, now a mere afterthought among Sega's development plans – and the countless achingly feeble attempts still being made by developers to come up with game characters with *character.* (Crash Bandicoot? Exactly.)

More than simply refining the Mario character over the years, though, Nintendo have created an entire universe around him, and Yoshi, Bowser, Princess Peach, Koopa Trooper, Big Boo and Toad (to name but a mere handful) have found their way into the consciousness of game players the world over.

With Mario, apart from relating to the people who actually *play* games, Nintendo have created an identity which has also shaped the awareness of adults who buy presents for their game-playing offspring. Consider: it's Christmas; little Johnny wants a new game for his Nintendo system – which is the most appealing title to the average parent, the latest *Mario* game, or *Rock Overactivehormones Kicks Alien Butt?*

Mario is an institution, a marketing department's dream. Which is not bad for a character whose appearance happened more by accident than design – his trademark cap, for example, coming about because, to use Miyamoto's words, "I can't come up with hairstyles so good."

PLAYABILITY

Nintendo have made their name by obeying – and refining – the myriad laws of gameplay which have been hammered out over the 20 or so years of video games' existence.

The company's first major contribution was actually hardware: the cross-style D-pad, which it introduced with the first Game & Watch unit. At a time when cumbersome joysticks were the accepted method of video game control, Nintendo proposed fingertip control (and subsequently went on to create a medically recognised condition, Nintendo Thumb, to the consternation of parents the world over), and every other game console manufacturer followed their lead.

In software terms, making a game playable is obviously all about being aware of the player's needs and expectations, and pandering to them. More than that it's something else, though, a grey area. Playability is a factor X, a secret ingredient, often happened upon by chance, but more commonly by deliberate endeavours where Nintendo is concerned.

One of the most important factors game designers face in delivering something that's playable is: never make the player feel that anyone but he is to blame for his performance on-screen. It's no good dropping a shed-load of spikes out of the ceiling upon the player's head just for the sake of the unexpected. Similarly, it's not acceptable to ask a player to perform an action where the outcome is shrouded in doubt (see, most famously, 'leaps of faith' in platform games, where the player is required to jump into an area that, because it can't be seen, could consist either of a crash mat of candy floss or a bed of nails). By being fair to the player, Nintendo ensure that he will always come back for more…

The relationship between what's happening on the screen and what's happening in the real world (i.e. what the player is doing with the joypad) is perhaps the most important aspect of playability, though. When you tell Mario to go right, his response is sharp, immediate; when you tell him to turn around and go back the other way, subtle inertia makes it a gradual (if swift) process – he doesn't merely perform an immediate about-turn.

These nuances are pretty much ignored by the player, and





another Mario game (*Super Mario Land*) and, more importantly, what's still the best *Tetris* available.

1990

- There's an NES in a third of American homes. A survey shows that Mario is recognisable to more American school children than Mickey Mouse.
- The 16-bit Super Famicom arrives. It struggles to overcome Sega's already-well-established Mega Drive, but eventually succeeds – especially in Japan – thanks to a combination of superior hardware and the excellence of games like *Super Mario World, F-Zero* and *Super Mario Kart.*

1993

- Nintendo announce 'Project Reality', an alliance with famous graphics workstation manufacturer Silicon Graphics that's going to produce a new super-console.

1994

- Virtual Boy, a weird, 32-bit, 3D 'virtual reality' type console, is launched by Nintendo. Despite actually being quite clever, and having a few good games, it dies through a lack of software support and just being too plain weird.

1996

- After many frustrating delays, the Nintendo 64 (as Project Reality has become) finally goes on sale in Japan and, a bit later, around the world.



Case Study 3 Zelda III A Link To The Past (SNES – 1993)

From the moment *Zelda III* begins, with the player waking from a dream, leaving his humble dwelling and walking out into rain-strewn village, it's obvious this is a very special thing indeed. It's not until much later, though, that its true delights become apparent: the freedom given to Link; the nature of the challenges which face him throughout a truly vast quest; the joyous playability within which it is all wrapped. These elements combine to make it one of history's most memorable games, and perhaps the greatest 16-bit game devised (against some pretty stiff competition).



Case Study 4 Super Mario Kart (SNES – 1993)

As if to slap their competition around the faces with a wet haddock, Nintendo showed their designers could turn their hands to just about anything and be tremendously successful – in this case a cute driving game. The key here was the breaking of ground: nothing like *Mario Kart* had ever been seen before and, indeed, many were initially dismissive of the title because of this. Given a chance, though, the game proved to be as compelling and rewarding as just about any platform game Nintendo have come up with. Its quality is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that it's as enjoyable as its 64-bit-powered successor.

ndo games so special?



that's exactly why they work so well, because they form what appears to be such a natural, integral part of the game-playing process. This type of character control was first laid out in *Mario Bros.* back in 1983, and it hasn't changed much in Mario games since, because it feels so damn *right*.

SURPRISE

Shigeru Miyamoto once said, "What if, on a crowded street, you look up and see something appear that, given what we know, shouldn't be there? You either shake your head and dismiss it or you accept that there's much more to the world than we think. Perhaps it really is a doorway to another place."

This sense of unknown possibilities is one essential factor in the success of so many Nintendo games over the years. In game terms it's all about presenting the unexpected, whether that's an invisible bonus block that the player bumps into during a game of *Super Mario Bros.* or a boss monster in *Super Metroid* which reanimates after the player has (rightly) believed it to be vanquished.

Think about the first time you saw the small alien ship zip onto the screen in *Asteroids*. Or the first time your ship was captured in *Galaga*. Or, even, when you realised that *Zelda III's* world was twice as large as you first supposed it was, because of all that Light/Dark-type stuff. All classic video game surprises.

VARIETY

There can be few games worse than those which present level after level of repetitive, predictable action. How can game designers expect people to want to play on when they're merely presenting the same kind of gameplay that has been experienced over the last few levels, refined only in the form of new backgrounds? This is perhaps the most valuable lesson that Nintendo's designers can teach their peers: give the gamer room to *grow*.

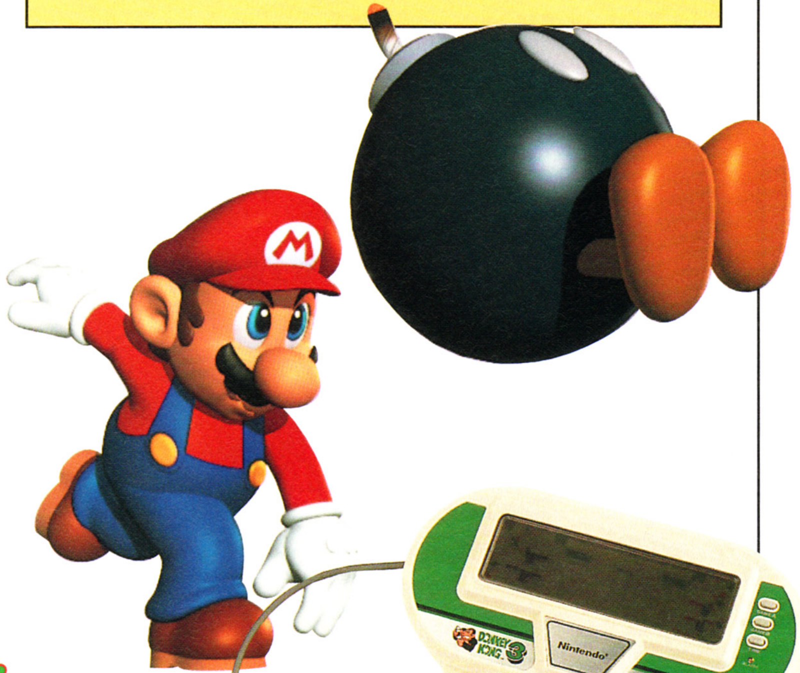
SNES titles *Zelda III* and *Super Metroid* are fantastic examples of how player interest can be retained throughout long-term challenges: as your character explores new areas and finds new items, these items are not merely bags of gold or bunches of fruit or some such other score-related paraphernalia; they are *of use*.

So the characters in *Zelda* and *Metroid* continually gain new skills as they progress, whether it's Link's boomerang or Samus's super-jump cabability. (You could even look at *Super Mario World*, in which Mazza collects a cape.) Crucially, each game's environment is packed with locations which their players will reach and think, Now, I know I must be able to get through this section – if only I knew *how*.

This dangling of carrots is a trick Nintendo use to make nearly all their games so horrendously addictive. The rest of the world, however, seems to be taking an awfully long time to cotton on.

Case Study 5 Super Mario 64 (N64 – 1996)

The game that purportedly took over five years to develop (beginning its life as a Super FX-powered SNES title) is a landmark game for more than one reason. First, it managed to take Mario's firmly established world and convincingly translate it into three dimensions (not an easy feat when you consider the limitations presented by polygons). Second, and more importantly, it delivered true three-dimensional gameplay. Look at the game's 32-bit 'equivalents' (*Crash Bandicoot*, *Pandemonium*, etc), and the difference is clear. The most ambitious videogame ever realised.





NEXT MONTH

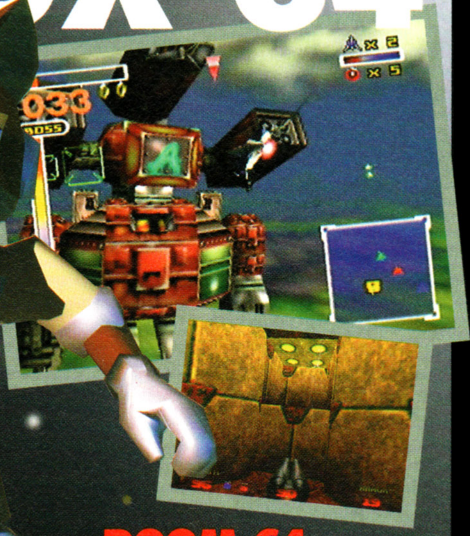
N64 Magazine continues its probings in issue 3, which'll contain a complete A-Z guide to Japanese developers – and which games they're all working on!

Coming next month in...

N64 MAGAZINE ISSUE 3

STARFOX 64





The Japanese are getting Star Fox 64 first, and **N64** Magazine will be getting it immediately afterwards. And we'll play with Fox, Slippy, Peppy and Falco till our thumbs are sore, making sure we get right the way through the game before delivering our verdict. Can it really be as good as it looks? We reckon it could be even better!



INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER 64

J-League Perfect Striker is the best football game on any format, we discovered in **N64**, issue 1. And ISS64 – toughened up and with world teams – is better still. We'll be reviewing it in incredible detail next month.

DOOM 64

James has already played *Doom* most of the way through, and absolutely loves it. By next month he'll have made it right to the end, he predicts, and will be ready to reveal all.

We'll also be reviewing...

KILLER INSTINCT GOLD
The N64's best beat-'em-up (which, admittedly, isn't saying much) arrives in the UK next month. We'll have pages on it.

POWER PRO BASEBALL 4
A competitor to *King of Pro Baseball* from the famous Konami, held over from this issue.

MAH JONG 64
Of great interest to Wil. And a couple of his friends.

HOW TO...

...get the other 50 stars in Super Mario 64
The concluding part of Zy's peerless guide.

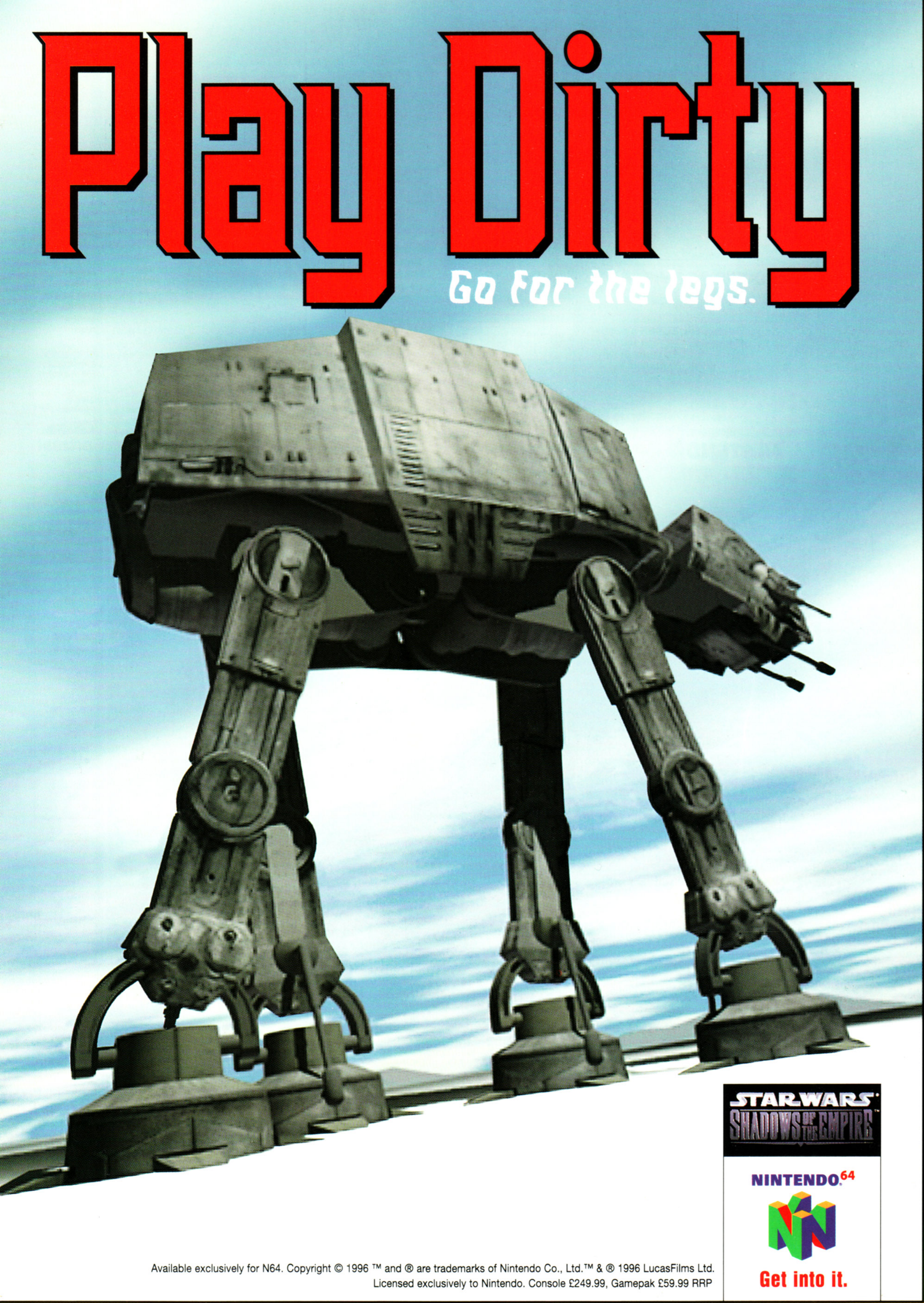
...understand Japanese games
Tim explains how to safely navigate import games full of Japanese text.

...find the rest of the Challenge Points in Shadows of the Empire
James finishes off his exhaustive search.

AND! Is Luigi in *Super Mario 64*? What's the Jolt Pak like? What's the latest news on *Zelda*?

Issue 3 on sale Thursday, May 22nd

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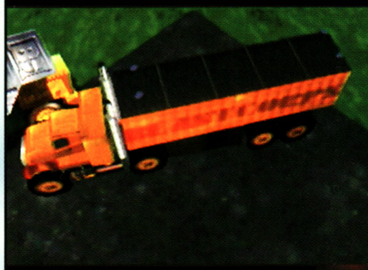


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